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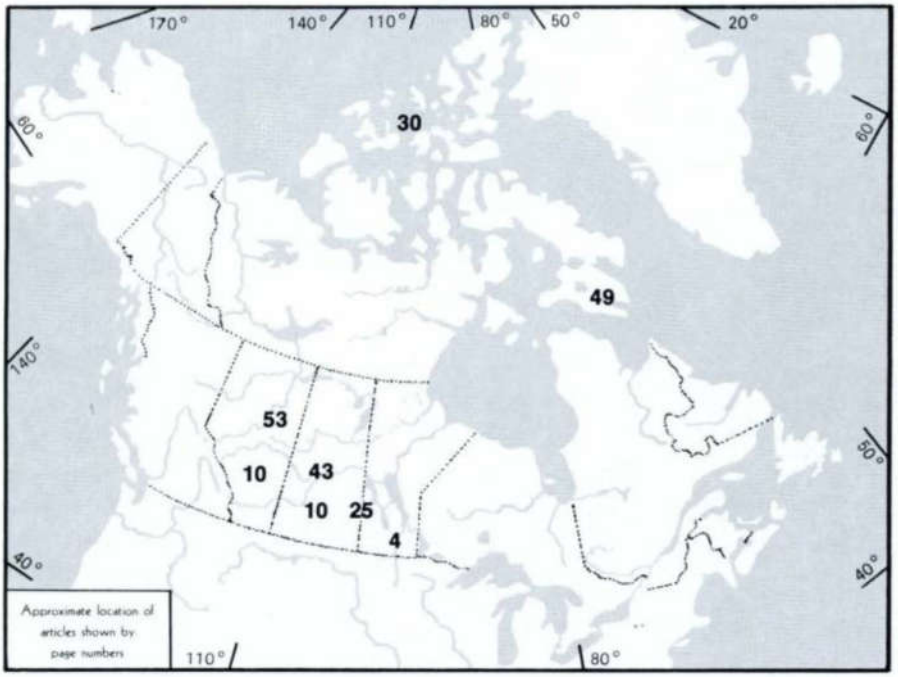

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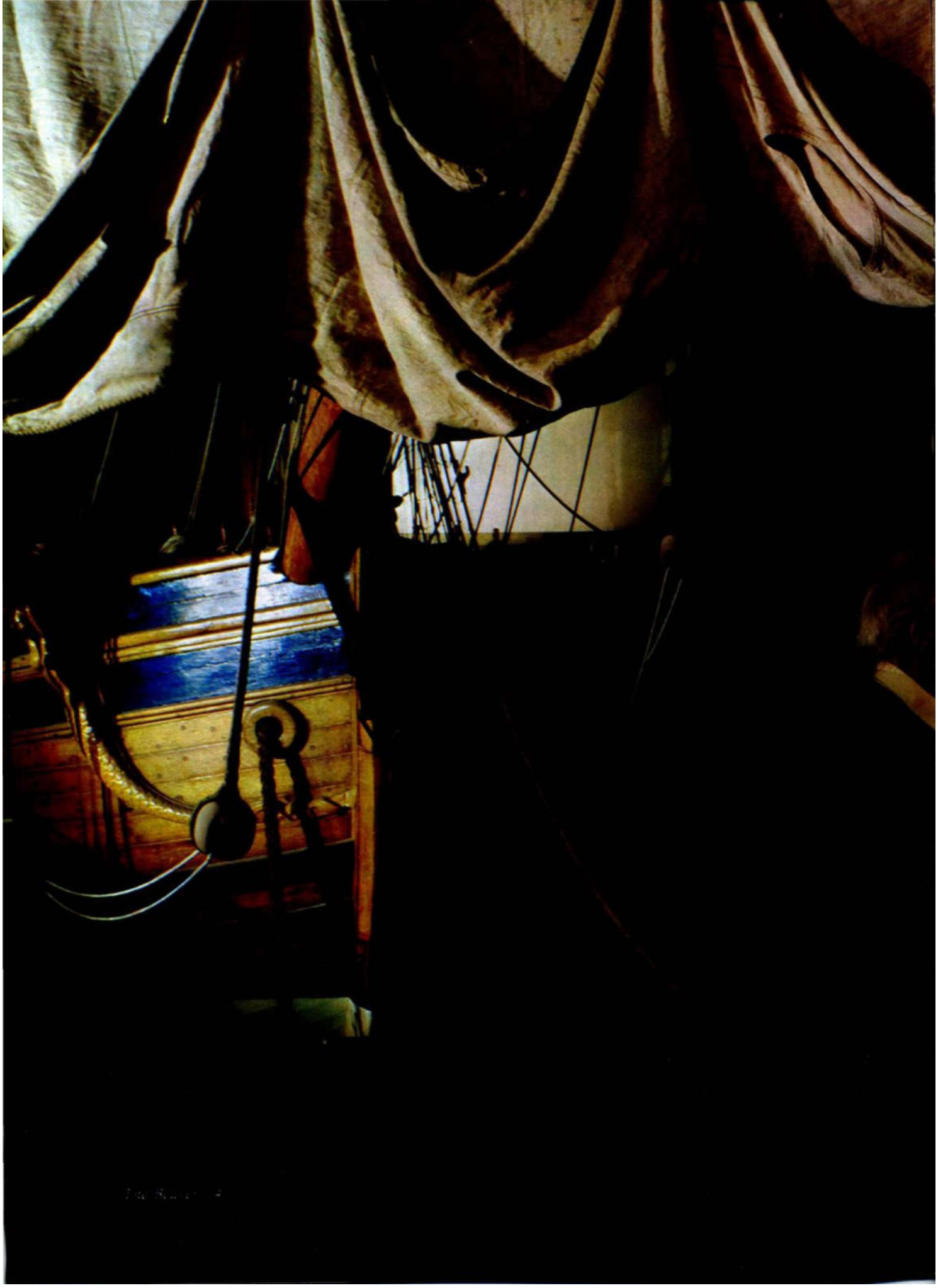
"Henry Kelsey came down with a good fleet of Indians; and hath travelled and endeavoured to keep the Peace among them according to my Order."

Governor George Geyer, York Fort, wrote this in 1692 of Company explorer Henry Kelsey, renowned for his expeditions to the prairie country. He was the first man of his time in Western Canada to master the difficult but essential technique of living and travelling like an Indian, to work seriously on the native languages and, most important of all, to act as a peacemaker between the various tribes.

Great men—past and present—build a great Company.

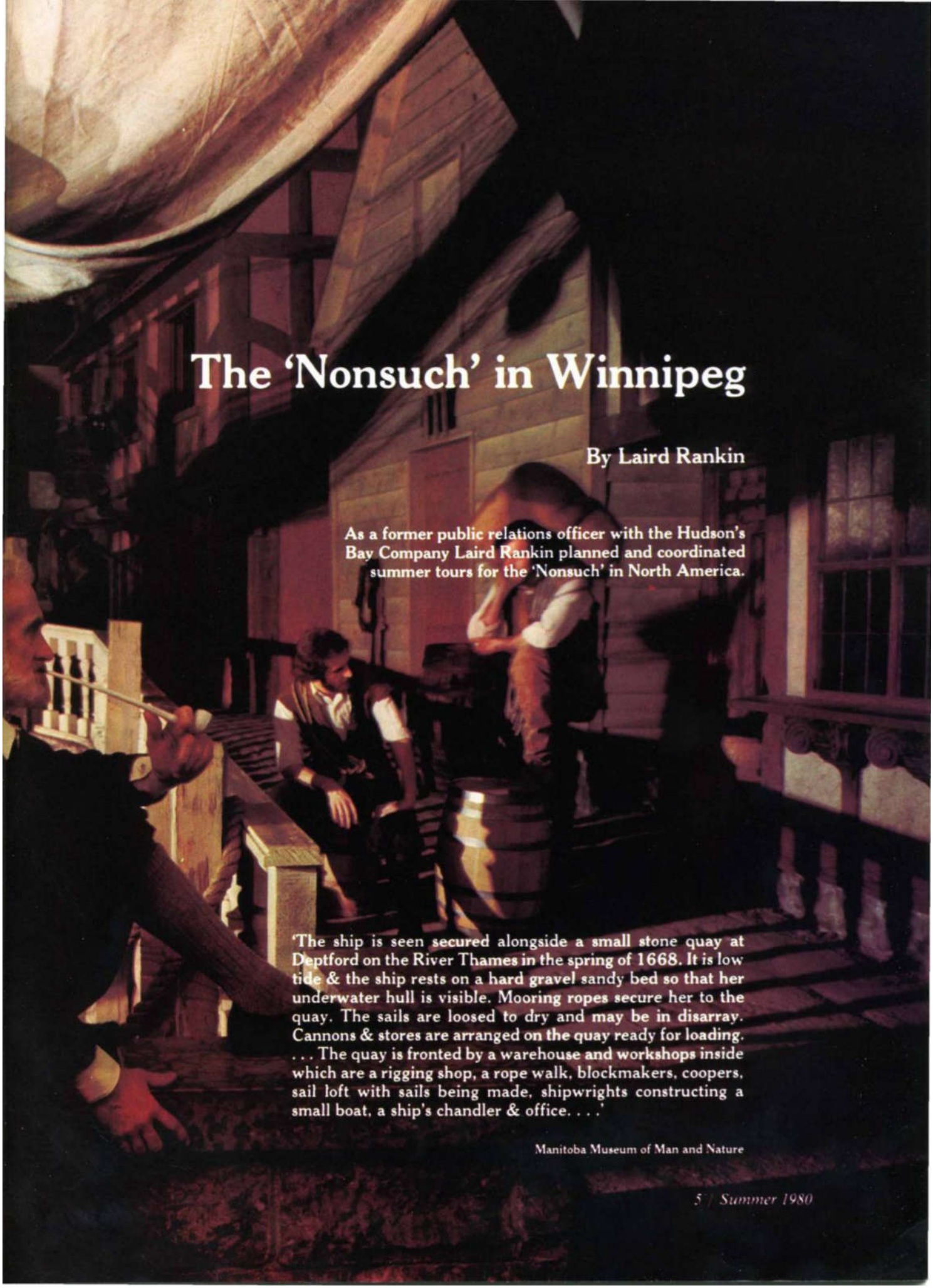
Hudson's Bay Company



The 'Nonsuch' in Winnipeg

By Laird Rankin

As a former public relations officer with the Hudson's Bay Company Laird Rankin planned and coordinated summer tours for the 'Nonsuch' in North America.



'The ship is seen secured alongside a small stone quay at Deptford on the River Thames in the spring of 1668. It is low tide & the ship rests on a hard gravel sandy bed so that her underwater hull is visible. Mooring ropes secure her to the quay. The sails are loosed to dry and may be in disarray. Cannons & stores are arranged on the quay ready for loading. . . . The quay is fronted by a warehouse and workshops inside which are a rigging shop, a rope walk, blockmakers, coopers, sail loft with sails being made, shipwrights constructing a small boat, a ship's chandler & office. . . .'

Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature

THE *NONSUCH* of the seventeenth century was a sturdy, 53-foot ketch of oak whose accomplishments far exceeded her size. Her enterprising voyage of 1668 — from England to the bottom of James Bay and home again the next year with a cargo of beaver pelts — led to the incorporation of the Hudson's Bay Company on 2 May 1670.

The *Nonsuch* replica of the twentieth century, unlike sister ships that flew the Hudson's Bay Company flag, did not engage in trade; nor did she serve as a supply ship to Company posts in the Arctic. She was built by English craftsmen in true period fashion for the specific purpose of commemorating the Company's 300th anniversary.

From her launching on 26 August 1968 until 29 September 1972, the *Nonsuch* served as a floating ambassador of goodwill, first in the waters of the United Kingdom and then on the Canadian side of the Atlantic. During this time she not only proved to be a popular attraction in ports as far apart as London, England, and Victoria, B.C., she logged a seafaring life as well.

The replica came to Canada unceremoniously, as deck cargo — dismantled, stripped of her pine masts,

flax canvas sails, and hemp rigging — in March 1970. This was one of four times that she was reduced to a hull before being refitted for another season at, usually, another place.

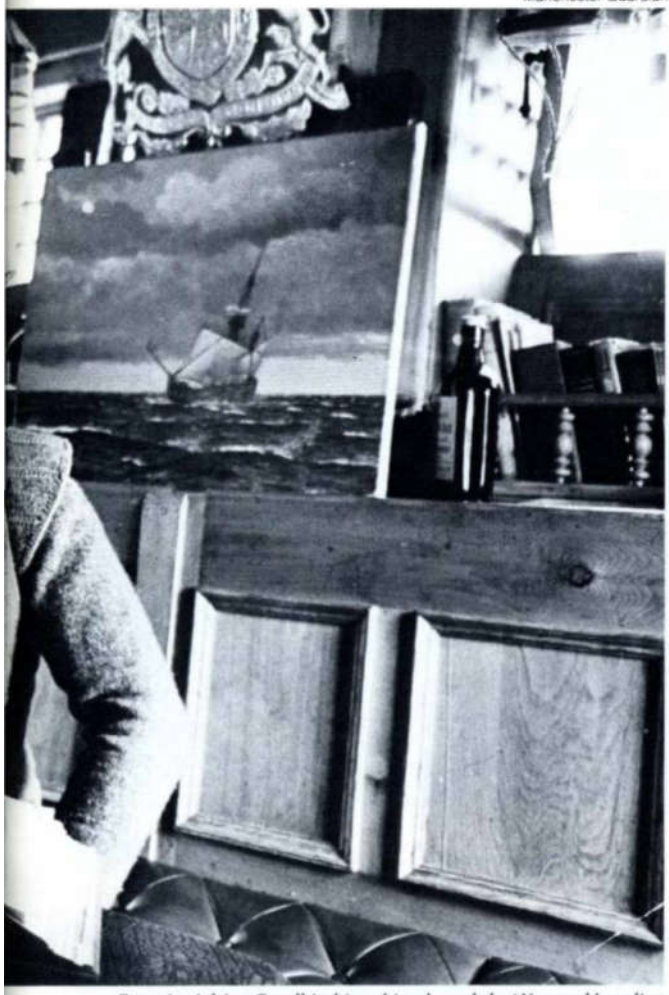
During her time under sail, she survived a severe North Atlantic winter gale (with a force 9 wind) and a sudden Lake Ontario squall that nearly sent her under. In 1972 she circumnavigated Vancouver Island, ending the voyage by nearly piling up on Race Rocks south-west of Victoria. To her credit ashore was the dubious distinction of two overland journeys by truck: the first from the western tip of Lake Superior to Seattle, Washington; and the second from Seattle to Winnipeg where her career as a museum piece began. In Winnipeg her popularity remained undiminished and she continued to be a seventeenth-century ship often at odds with twentieth-century conditions.

The plan to give a fully operational period vessel to a prairie province unsettled some people, one of whom was the ship's captain, Adrian Small. In the ship's log of 22 June 1972 he wrote: 'A dry-land berth

The 'Nonsuch' replica under full sail on Lake Ontario, 1971. Toronto's 'Ontario Place' is in the background.

Alex Gray

Manchester Guardian



Captain Adrian Small in his cabin aboard the 'Nonsuch' replica.

for the ship inside a museum building in Winnipeg, Manitoba, is a dismal prospect for a well-founded, seaworthy & new vessel.' To the Company and the province, however, the proposition made sense. The gift of the ship would complete the Company's commitment to the province's shrine honouring the Canadian centennial of 1967 — a cultural complex in downtown Winnipeg consisting of a concert hall, a planetarium and a museum. The province, through the Manitoba Centennial Corporation, was eager to accept the vessel and agreed to build a suitable gallery as part of the museum. She originally was to have formed 'the nucleus of a transporation section in a separate building of the museum . . .'

Gradually the concept of this building changed from a transportation museum displaying 'articles representative of early transportation by trail, river, rail and air in Manitoba' to a building exclusively for the ship. After some deliberation the Manitoba Centennial Corporation decided that the building should be a wing of the museum, connected to the main structures by an above-the-ground tunnel.

On 19 November 1973 the hull of the ship arrived in Winnipeg in a driving snowstorm — slung on its starboard side, bolted to sets of wheels and attached to the rear of a semi-trailer truck cab. In the previous four months the sod for the gallery had been turned, the excavation dug and the foundation poured and set. The following day the hull was hoisted awkwardly but dramatically into the crisp winter air by crane and placed on 11 steel eye beams — later to be disguised as timbers — that served as keel blocks.

By the spring of 1974 the building around the *Nonsuch* was enclosed and, shortly afterward, work began on refitting the ship and creating a complementary environment. As its final responsibility to the *Nonsuch,* the Company agreed to carry out the refit. For that highly specialized task, it assembled in Winnipeg for a ten-week period a team of ten men that included some original members of the ship's crew. One of these was Adrian Small.

Small played a dual role indoors. Not only did he supervise the painstaking work of the refit team but he was there to see, and to some extent oversee, the development of much of an idea he had proposed to the Committee responsible for the vessel's Winnipeg facility in October 1972. Despite his previous reservations about the ship's ultimate destiny, he did everything possible to ensure that the *Nonsuch* would be properly and effectively displayed. In a lucid handwritten report, Small described the scene as the original vessel was about to embark on the famous voyage of 1668:

> The ship is seen secured alongside a small stone quay at Deptford on the River Thames in the spring of 1668. It is low tide & the ship rests on a hard gravel sandy bed so that her underwater hull is visible. Mooring ropes secure her to the quay. The sails are loosed to dry and may be in disarray. Cannons & stores are arranged on the quay ready for loading. . . . The quay is fronted by a warehouse and workshops inside which are a rigging shop, a rope walk, block-makers, coopers, sail loft with sails being made, shipwrights constructing a small boat, a ship's chandler & office. . . .

No one else had thought to make the ship and setting complementary; Small's proposal pumped life into a potentially dormant display.

Creation of the interior of the Nonsuch Gallery was closely parallel to the construction of the ship itself. The Company had specified a replica of 'maximum possible authenticity' in which the twentieth century was kept sternly in check, and only allowed on board — reluctantly — as required by law. This was achieved through the use of seventeenth-century tools, the revival of almost obsolete skills, much craftsmanship and a keen spirit and discipline from all who participated in the project. The same was true in the gallery. Plasterers had to investigate old plastering techniques in order to duplicate them in the period buildings. Carpenters had to be trained to wield an adze or a broad axe — a period tool used to

W. R. Pearce

The replica departing Spokane, Washington, November 1971, to winter in Seattle where she was refitted for the activities of the following summer.

The Nonsuch Gallery under construction in downtown Winnipeg, 1973.

A. R. Huband

hew much of the replica and needed in Winnipeg to shape the dockside timbers.

Public safety regulations for the City of Winnipeg stipulated that a protective railing be built around the edge of the dock, something out of context in the seventeenth century but essential to keep curious twentieth-century man from plunging to the dry riverbed 12 feet below. The museum was able to satisfy the regulation but still keep the twentieth century at bay by barricading the edge of the dock with the ship's stores: the bales, barrels, rope and timbers that were going aboard for the pending voyage.

Interior lighting presented unusual problems. The museum did not want to depict a time of day that was associated with bustling activity because of the staff a busy scene would require. Dawn was therefore chosen for its economy, lethargy and soft light. The appropriate visual effect was created using filtered light — not from behind the buildings — but from fixtures in the ceiling. These in turn created nuisance shadows such as those on the wall from a clump of pilings that rose from the riverbed. This problem was neatly solved, however, by painting another clump of pilings on the wall where the unwanted shadows fell.

Coincident with the activity inside the gallery, the Company and the museum began the paperwork associated with the transfer of the ship. There were insurance policies covering the vessel that had to be cancelled by the Company and taken out by the museum. The ship's Canadian coasting licence had to be returned to Customs in Montreal. It had been issued in March of 1970 by a bewildered official who, after consultation with his superior in Ottawa, decided that such a routine licence could be granted to a ship that defied modern marine classification.

The Registry of British Ships in London, England, had to be informed of the change in ownership and this involved more than a simple notification. The Company was advised by the assistant registrar that 'In order that this change in ownership may be recorded in the Register will you please have completed the enclosed Bill of Sale in favour of the new owners.' In place of the Bill the Company sent a copy of the Deed of Gift, the official document that transferred the vessel to the museum, with the explanation that there was no sale involved; that the ship was a gift. This was not satisfactory and the assistant registrar replied with regret 'that the Deed does not meet the requirements for transfer of title in the Shipping Register under the rules laid down by the Merchant Shipping Act of 1894'. Furthermore a statutory bill of sale was required 'whether any purchase money passes or not'.

The *Nonsuch* officially became museum property on 31 January 1974, the day the Deed of Gift was signed between the two parties. To help execute this important transfer, a replacement cost of the replica had to be determined. It had cost the HBC $175,000 in 1967-1968 to research and build the *Nonsuch*. To determine her replacement value, the Company wrote the builder, J. Hinks & Son of Appledore, Devon, in November of 1973. Alan Hinks replied that the cost would 'be in the region of £150,000', adding that, 'this is guesswork but is not probably very far out.' The Company converted the Hinks estimate into Canadian currency and produced a figure of $348,000. This was a fraction of the amount the Company had spent to build and operate the ship.

By 28 July 1974, according to a report prepared by Captain Small, the *Nonsuch* had been restored:

> to sea-going condition, fully rigged and sails bent. All structural damage sustained during her overland journey from the west coast [had been repaired] and finished in accord with the original specifications. Modern fittings unsuitable for museum display, or the period of the ship [had been removed].
>
> All masts and spars are now in good condition. Under the heel of the main mast is a medallion commemorating the tricentenary of the Hudson's Bay Company (1670-1970) and under the mizzen mast is a Canadian 10 cent 'Bluenose' piece, 1974.

Small was careful to see that the refit team was not over-zealous in its restoration work. He had the men preserve some of the 'scars, nicks, and worn spots' she had collected at sea (and perhaps on the road) for these were signs of life, 'cherished symbols of her colourful days as a sailing ship.' Without them she might look like a ship that had never seen the sea.

The ceremony that opened the Nonsuch Gallery was held on 8 December 1974. Mr H. W. Sutherland, as senior vice-president of the Company, presented a copy of the Deed of Gift to the province and transferred Adrian Small's captain's hat to the museum's president, Dr F. A. L. Mathewson.

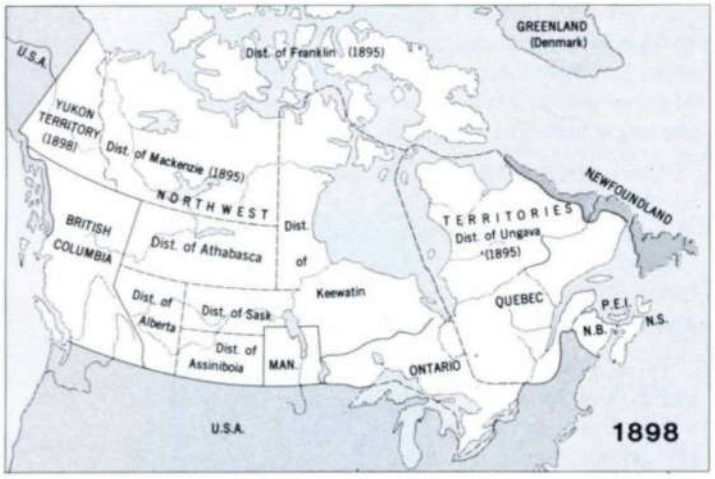
In its first five years, the *Nonsuch* has attracted more than 2,000,000 visitors from all parts of the world. Every survey conducted by the museum since the gallery opened has revealed that the *Nonsuch* is the museum's stellar attraction, despite stiff competition from other exhibitions. Interest in the vessel is enhanced by her period setting. Nothing has been overlooked: there are sounds of screeching gulls and creaking timbers and a pungent smell of Stockholm tar, the sticky coating on the standing rigging.

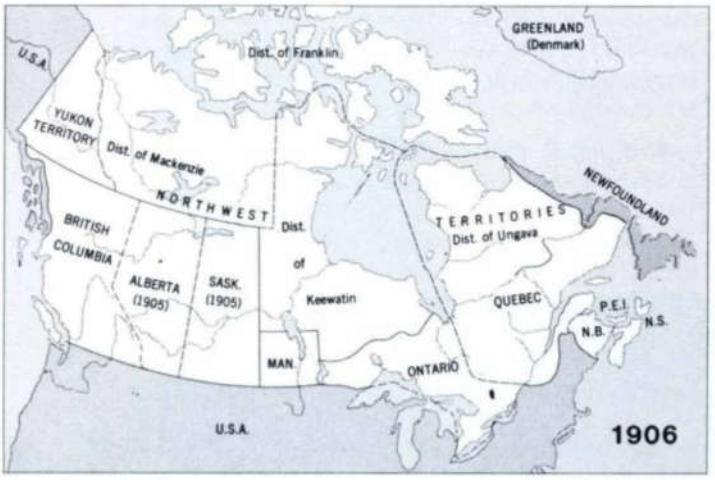
With minor exceptions, everything in the gallery is open to the public. Visitors may push the tiller, pull the ropes, look into the captain's quarters or descend to the river bottom and examine the ship's keel. The gallery is so realistic that some visitors have complained of sea-sickness. Others have steadfastly insisted that they felt the ship move when on board. In conjunction with the ship, the museum has developed a number of education programs: guided tours, an explanation of the ship's rigging, and talks on maritime history and the ship's place in it. ◆

In September 1905, the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta were formed from the North-West Territories districts of Alberta, Assiniboia, Athabasca and Saskatchewan.

To commemorate the 75th anniversary of the two provinces, Grant MacEwan, Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta (1965-1974) and distinguished author of numerous books dealing with the history of Western Canada, recalls the events that led up to:

The Birth of Twin Provinces





For the twin provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta birth was long-delayed and difficult, making the period of gestation an agonizing 35 years.

If there had been such a thing as a birthright, Alberta might have claimed it because of the circumstances which made one twin a senior to the other by three days. The reasons were simple enough: Governor-General Earl Grey and Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier wanted to attend the inaugural ceremonies at both of the recently named provisional capitals and, with transportation and travel at a still-primitive stage, guests had no hope of being present at Edmonton and Regina on the same day. It was arranged, therefore, that Alberta's inauguration would be conducted on Friday, 1 September 1905, and Saskatchewan's on Monday, 4 September. It was a perfectly reasonable and satisfactory arrangement.

That part of the North-West Territories situated between the tiny province of Manitoba and the big province of British Columbia, and about to be transformed into two new provinces, had a total area of roughly half a million square miles and, in 1901, a human population of 158,940, indicating a population density of one person for every three square miles. It would still classify as one of the most sparsely populated parts of the world and anybody who argued that residents were too thinly scattered to justify the formation of a province, was not to be ignored.

Most of the area's people lived on farms and occupied homesteads when the count was made in 1901. Calgary, in the same year, had a population of 4,091; Edmonton had 2,626; the territorial capital,

Archives of Saskatchewan

By the turn of the century wheat had replaced furs in the economy of the West. Above, a threshing scene near Moose Jaw, c. 1895.

Regina, had 2,249 and Saskatoon had 113. Outside the area being considered for elevation to a province, the gold-rush city of Dawson in the Yukon was bigger than any of these places, with a population reported at 9,142.

But the part that was soon to rank with the other Canadian provinces was challenging country, harvesting its biggest crop and witnessing an accelerating influx of immigrants and homesteaders. Where 'fur was king' a few short years before, wheat had suddenly gained the position of eminence. The price of 60 cents a bushel for good wheat at Regina brought few complaints, just as $4.50 per hundred pounds for the best butcher steers at Winnipeg seemed to be satisfactory to producers. An Edmonton merchant offered mantle clocks, 'regularly $5.00, for $3.00'; and ladies' corsets, 'new style', were advertised at $1.00 at Robinsons in Calgary. The Queen's Hotel, with up-to-date accommodation and a fancy democrat meeting all incoming trains, offered rooms at $2.00 per day, and T.S.C. Lee, dealer in real estate, was inviting prospective buyers to inspect his building lots on Stephen Avenue — now Eighth Avenue — priced at $200.00.

Most citizens living in the area shared the opinion of Frederick Haultain, the perennial premier of the Territories, that the time had come to press for provincial status. The federal government had been slow in granting self-government for the Territories and downright negligent in furnishing funds with which to meet the minimum needs in the developing region. It was now reacting with resistance whenever the question of a new western province or provinces was raised. Western people were irked when they recalled how the central government, in order to relieve its embarrassment over the Red River Insurrection, had hastened to create the Province of Manitoba in 1870, and then allowed the neighbouring territory to wait for more than 30 years.

The Dominion Parliament, in 1875, after acquiring the West from the Hudson's Bay Company, passed the North-West Territories Act, thereby providing a framework for constituted order and government. The action was completely in the spirit of the British North America Act of 1867 which made provision for the admittance to Confederated Canada of 'Rupert's Land and the North-western Territory, or either of them, into the Union'.

But in 1867 Canadian leaders had been in no hurry about taking the first steps to acquire the vast North-West from its proprietors, the Hudson's Bay Company and the Imperial Government. It was only when the United States, charged with the spirit of Manifest Destiny, displayed its interest in owning the North-West, that Sir John A. Macdonald's concern was awakened. Hastily, two of Sir John's ministers, Sir George Cartier and the Honourable William McDougall, were sent to London for the purpose of working out an agreement with the Hudson's Bay Company and the Imperial Government for the early purchase and transfer of the West.

The Imperial Government was eager to promote the deal and negotiations proceeded rapidly. Having agreed to a settlement of $1,500,000 plus certain lands in the area, officers of the old Company, on 19 November 1869, signed the Deed of Surrender and in

The North-West Territories Council meeting in Regina in 1884. Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney, at the head of the table, and six members of the Council were appointed by the federal government; eight were elected members.

William Notman, Notman Photographic Archives, McCord Museum, McGill University

due course, all of what is now known as Western Canada passed to the new Dominion of Canada.

Manitoba was accorded provincial standing forthwith, but most of the country lying between the new 'postage stamp' province and the Rockies was still a primitive frontier and nobody was in a hurry to make plans for its future. And, so, another five years went by before the passage of the North-West Territories Act which provided for the appointment of a Lieutenant-Governor and an appointed Advisory Committee (not exceeding five members) to be known as the Council. The Act allowed, also, that when 'any district or portion of the North-West Territories, not exceeding an area of one thousand square miles, contains a population of not less than one thousand inhabitants of adult age, exclusive of aliens or unenfranchised Indians, the Lieutenant-Governor shall, by proclamation, erect such district or portion into an electoral district . . . and such electoral district shall thenceforth be entitled to elect a member of the Council or of the Legislative Assembly, as the case may be.'

The Prince Albert district, known as Lorne, was the first to qualify for the right to elect a member to the Council, and in 1881 chose Lawrence Clarke as its representative to the Territorial Council, meeting at Battleford. But in the next year, 1882, six elected members took their seats and were thus able to outvote the appointed members.

Clearly, democracy was on the move and one of its

In 1884, Frederick Haultain arrived in Western Canada and opened a law office in Fort Macleod where this photograph, with a bull team in the foreground, was taken c. 1890.

Glenbow-Alberta Archives

most important moments came in 1887 when a by-election in the electoral district of Macleod brought a young lawyer, Frederick Haultain, to sit on the Council. Born in England, Haultain came to Canada with his family when he was three years old. He grew up in Peterborough, Ontario, and after graduation from the University of Toronto, he was on his way to the West to practise law. Stepping from a Canadian Pacific Railway train in 1884, he saw frontier Calgary, then took a stage-coach to Fort Macleod where he rented a log shack to serve as an office and announced to the community that he was there to pursue his chosen profession of law.

Although a total stranger on that cowboy frontier, he was immediately popular. When the sitting member on the Legislative Council, Lord Boyle, resigned and a by-election was called, Haultain was elected and took his seat on the Council. By this time the Council had six appointed members and fourteen elected members. It may have presented an imposing appearance, but federal powers vested in the Lieutenant-Governor left the elected members with little to do except offer advice and hope that the all-powerful Lieutenant-Governor was listening.

None of the elected members were satisfied with an administration which left the spending of all federal funds, and hence the real governing authority, to the Lieutenant-Governor who was responsible to his Ottawa masters and them alone. They protested but not very effectively. They soon recognized the soft but stubborn voice of the young member from Fort Macleod as the one for which they had been waiting. From the moment of his election to the impotent Council, the demand for more autonomy in the administration of territorial affairs rang louder and clearer.

The federal government made a gesture of compliance in the next year, 1888, and authorized a Legislative Assembly to replace the Advisory Council. It sounded well and an Advisory Committee of four elected members with Haultain as chairman, seemed to bear some resemblance to an Executive Council or Cabinet. But it failed to measure up to expectations because the Ottawa officials refused to relax their grip upon money for expenditures. Haultain, with the clearest views about responsible government, refused to be party to this mockery of autonomy. Why have an elected assembly if it could not have control of its budget? When Lieutenant-Governor Joseph Royal continued to refuse to submit the public accounts to the Legislative Assembly, Haultain and his Advisory Committee resigned from their special role.

The Lieutenant-Governor appointed another Advisory Committee but it failed to obtain the confidence of the Assembly and again the Committee

Archives of Saskatchewan

Lieutenant-Governor Joseph Royal. He was appointed by the federal government in Ottawa and submitted no public accounts to the Legislative Assembly.

members' resignations went forward to the Lieutenant-Governor. This time, seeing a legislative crisis developing, he refused to accept them. Haultain and those members who shared his views became stubborn and refused to consider budgetary matters until they were given an accounting of the expenditures of the previous year.

The embarrassed Lieutenant-Governor was obliged, in 1889, to appoint yet another Advisory Committee but the majority of the members of the Assembly continued to refuse their support until assured of a better degree of recognition for the democratically elected representatives of the people. The federal government became concerned and before the Assembly met in 1892, the North-West Territories Act was further amended to give the Assembly the authority to direct the spending of its funds, regardless of the source of the money. It marked the end of autocratic authority in matters of spending and a new and more responsible role for the elected members and the Advisory Committee of which Haultain was again the chairman. Now, in this year of 1892, the committee looked more like a cabinet and its chairman more like a premier.

Haultain did not escape all political reverses. He saw Hugh St Quentin Cayley taking the foremost position in the Assembly by occupying the chairman-

George Markham

Yorkton as it was in 1899, when Haultain spoke of the financial plight of the Territories.

ship of the Advisory Committee for a brief spell and he saw R. B. Bennett conducting a moderately successful opposition in the Assembly but he, Haultain, was the acknowledged premier of the North-West Territories from 1897 until the provinces were formed in 1905. As premier he was obliged to live in Regina but he continued to represent the Macleod district in which he won his seat in most elections by acclamation.

The role of premier in an area as large as the North-West Territories was not an easy one, especially with the sky-rocketing immigration and settlement creating mounting needs for schools, roads, bridges, railways and public works in a hundred shapes. What made the position of public servant doubly difficult was the inadequacy of funds being provided from Ottawa. The federal government held the natural resources, retained the right to charter railways and imposed further upon territorial revenue from local sources by granting tax freedom to much railroad property. Under the circumstances of ever-growing needs in the Territories, Haultain had no choice but to plead for a better deal from Ottawa: either provincial status which would allow more freedom in finding funds in the area, or bigger government subsidies. Actually, the subsidies were increased with admirable regularity but the increases in demands for roads and schools and so on, grew more rapidly and Haultain, normally a very patient person, was growing impatient.

Most territorial editors stood with Haultain in the call for autonomy such as would come with the formation of a province. Some were declaring for 'Home Rule for the Territories' and agreeing that it was a matter of necessity. The existing policies were acting like brakes upon development and progress. Speaking at Yorkton late in 1899, Haultain explained the effect of the financial plight: the summer had been unusually wet and roads in many parts of the Territories had been washed out and bridges carried away, but the money available had been sufficient to make only one-quarter of the urgent repairs. No funds remained. The federal government was presenting the Territories around the world as 'a home for millions' but had no right, in Haultain's view, to invite mass settlement unless it was prepared to pay for at least a minimum of services.

With the full backing of the Legislative Assembly, Haultain prepared a resolution challenging the senior government to consider at once the terms under which the 'Territories or any part thereof shall be established as a Province, and that, before any such Province is established, opportunity should be given to the people of the Territories, through their accredited representatives, of considering and discussing such terms and conditions'.

The motion which Haultain considered as 'the most important we have ever had to deal with', was prepared and moved by himself and seconded by his unfailing colleague, James Hamilton Ross, member for Moose Jaw. In speaking on it, Haultain held the floor for nearly four hours, presenting his case with the meticulous care of a conscientious lawyer arguing before the Supreme Court of Canada. He was, in effect, speaking to the people of the Territories and the Government of Canada as much as to the Legislative Assembly. Those listeners within the sound of his voice were enchanted and, except for

some pointed questions from the politically ambitious R. B. Bennett, the member for Calgary, he completed the marathon speaking performance without interruption. Some observers said it was the most inspired and the most statesmanlike speech heard in the Assembly up to that time.

The resolution was approved without a dissenting voice and forwarded to Ottawa, while the premier warned his colleagues that they should not expect immediate action. He was right in his warning, because almost a year passed before there was a formal acknowledgement of the document's arrival at Ottawa. The reply that came in March 1901, was from the Honourable Clifford Sifton, Minister of the Interior, and he chose his words with care, admitting that he was not at that time prepared to take a positive stand on the matter of provincial autonomy. He would go as far as to suggest that 'the time has arrived when the question of organizing the Territories on a Provincial basis ought to be the subject of full consideration'.

Later in the year, Haultain and his cabinet colleague, A. L. Sifton, made their annual pilgrimage to Ottawa to ask for funds that would be in keeping with the need, and while in the capital, they met the Prime Minister and a committee of his cabinet ministers. The visitors did not neglect to raise the subject of provincial status for the area marked by the four official districts known as Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, Athabasca and Alberta, and came away with an invitation to prepare and submit a list of specific proposals for the creation of a province or provinces.

Haultain was happy to comply and he prepared a draft bill such as might be placed before the House of Commons and sent it to the Prime Minister along with a covering letter. But again the Ottawa officials seemed to lose enthusiasm, and when Haultain pressed for reasons, he was again told that the territorial population was extremely sparse and that there were still wide differences of opinion about the number of provinces that should be established.

In any case, provincial autonomy was at once the leading topic of conversation and the foremost subject for newspaper editorials in the West. Haultain found new muscle and energy for the task he had undertaken. He seized every opportunity to speak from public platforms and found most people in complete agreement with him. True, a few citizens, afraid that provincial status would lead to higher taxes, were opposed.

The support most difficult to assess was that which Haultain wanted and needed from the East. Prime Minister Laurier, his ministers and most eastern Members of Parliament, were being needlessly cautious. Their enthusiasm seemed to fluctuate like the store price of dairy butter — never very high. The Honourable Clifford Sifton, writing on behalf of the

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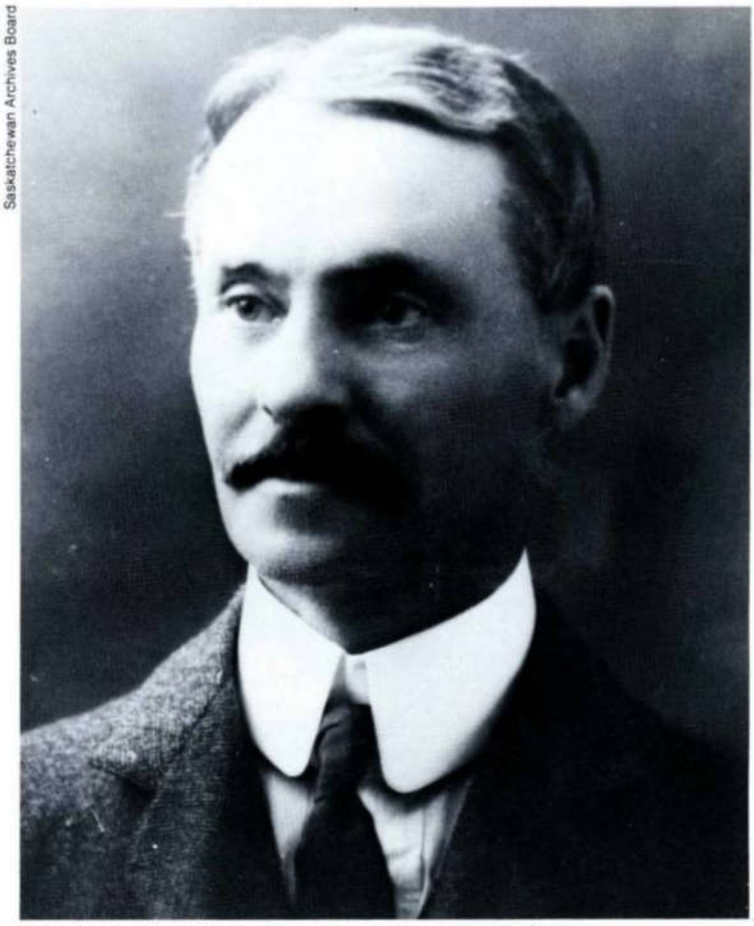


The Honourable F. W. G. Haultain, premier of the North-West Territories from 1897 until the provinces were formed in 1905.

government, admitted to Haultain that his colleagues were still worried about the sparseness of population and the fact that western people had not yet agreed among themselves about the number of provinces they wanted.

The territorial election of 1902 served to confirm the extent of western backing for Haultain's policies; it also exposed some pockets of opposition. The great majority of westerners wanted their region to become a province but there were enough others to ensure debate, as the front page of the *Macleod Gazette* of 16 May 1902 showed clearly. Displayed most prominently on the pages of that pioneer paper were two letters addressed to the electors of the district: one from candidate Charles Harris who was opposed to the idea of province formation and the other from Premier Haultain who had been the leading supporter and was now becoming a crusader for provincial autonomy.

The Harris message said: 'As to provincial autonomy for the Territories, I am opposed to it because I do not think the time has come or the population and prosperity of the Territories warrant

E. Brown Collection, Provincial Archives of Alberta

Sir Wilfrid Laurier, speaking at the inauguration ceremony at Edmonton, 1 September 1905. Behind the speaker is the McKay Avenue School where the first meeting of the Legislative Assembly was held.

assuming the responsibility of provincial status, together with the greatly increased liabilities necessarily attendant thereto. At present the Dominion Government supplies the principal portion of our revenue. Under provincial status, such revenue will have to be raised by direct taxation. The history of other lands has clearly shown that nothing will impede the progress and prosperity of a new and comparatively weak country as the burden of taxation. . . . Gentlemen, do not be misled; borrowed money must be repaid with interest. Charles Harris, Candidate.'

Haultain's message to the electors of his own constituency was reproduced by newspapers across the West and in the East, for the simple reason that he was now being seen as the prairie statesman and here was a useful summary of his views on an issue of national importance: 'At the present time the Government of the Territories is engaged in negotiations with the Dominion Government leading to the establishment of a part of the Territories upon the Provincial basis. Apart from all other considerations, financial necessity has forced this question to the front. A rapidly increasing population has caused the present revenues of the Territories to become totally inadequate to meet the public demands. . . . it does not consider the question of one or more Provinces to be of paramount importance in view of the magnitude of the other questions involved. These questions deal with the things which the Government on behalf of the people of the Territories has claimed must of right belong to any Province established in the West. . . . They are, briefly, (1) Equal rights with all the other Provinces of the Dominion and the same financial consideration that has been given to those Provinces, (2) Control of the public domain in the West by the West for the West, (3) Compensation for the alienation of any part of the public domain for purely Federal purposes, and (4) The removal of the unjust and onerous Canadian Pacific Railway exemption from taxation.'

Understanding the public's interest, Haultain knew he was expected to declare his position on the question of one, two, or three provinces for the area. Manitoba residents wanted to extend their boundary westward by annexing a portion of the North-West Territories. This, however, was not acceptable to the citizens of the Territories and not acceptable to Haultain. By a somewhat more popular proposal, the area under consideration would have been divided by a line running east and west to create one southern province and one northern. Other suggestions called

for three provinces and four provinces respectively. But the most popular call was for either one big single province or a north-south line to make two provinces as they exist today.

Haultain favoured a single province and in his message of 16 May 1902, said: 'The Government [of the Territories] has presented to the federal authorities the claims of the people of the Territories in a document which has been published and is being widely distributed. In that document the Territorial Government has expressed its opinion in favor of the organization of one province only. Action upon the whole question has been postponed by the Dominion Government, principally upon the ground that there is a "divergence of opinion respecting the question whether there should be one province only or more than one province" — a question which in the last resort is one for the Dominion Government to settle. The opinion of the Territorial Government is based upon the fact that in the past one Government and one Legislature have found no difficulty in conducting the affairs of the country other than such as arose from the inadequacy of the revenue, and it is not anticipated that any difficulty which cannot be met will arise in the future. There is a widespread and well-founded opinion existing throughout Canada against what has been called "over-Government" or "multiplicity of Governments," and there appears to be no substantial reason for the formation of more than one province in the Territories at the present time. Much less is there any reason for considering that other proposition which has been made on the part of the Province of Manitoba, namely the division of the people of the Territories by including within the limits of that province a considerable portion of the present district of Assiniboia, for the whole sentiment of the people concerned is against the proposal.'

Haultain's election successes in 1902 were seen as an endorsement of his demands for provincial rights and a rebuke to the federal government for its failure to move on the autonomy question. It was becoming clearer that the delay on the part of central government was due to the differences of opinion about how the new province or provinces should be set up. The most contentious issue was that of separate schools; and the bitter controversies growing out of Confederation in 1867, the Manitoba Act in 1870, the North-West Territories Act of 1875 and the school question in Manitoba in 1890, were revived. The people of Quebec believed separate schools should be assured by the Act to create the new province or provinces. Protestant Ontario was opposed to such statutory guarantee and Haultain held that the federal government should, by the terms of the British North America Act, leave this entirely to the provinces.

Haultain maintained his pressure upon Ottawa, writing in diplomatic terms but doing nothing to hide his impatience. In 1904, however, when Prime Minister Laurier was engaged in his own election campaign, he was hoping for added support from the Territories where the number of federal constituencies had been increased from four to ten. He made a public promise that, if returned to power, his government would be prepared to enter immediately into negotiations for the granting of provincial autonomy in the Territories. Laurier won the election and seven of the ten federal members elected in the Territories were his supporters.

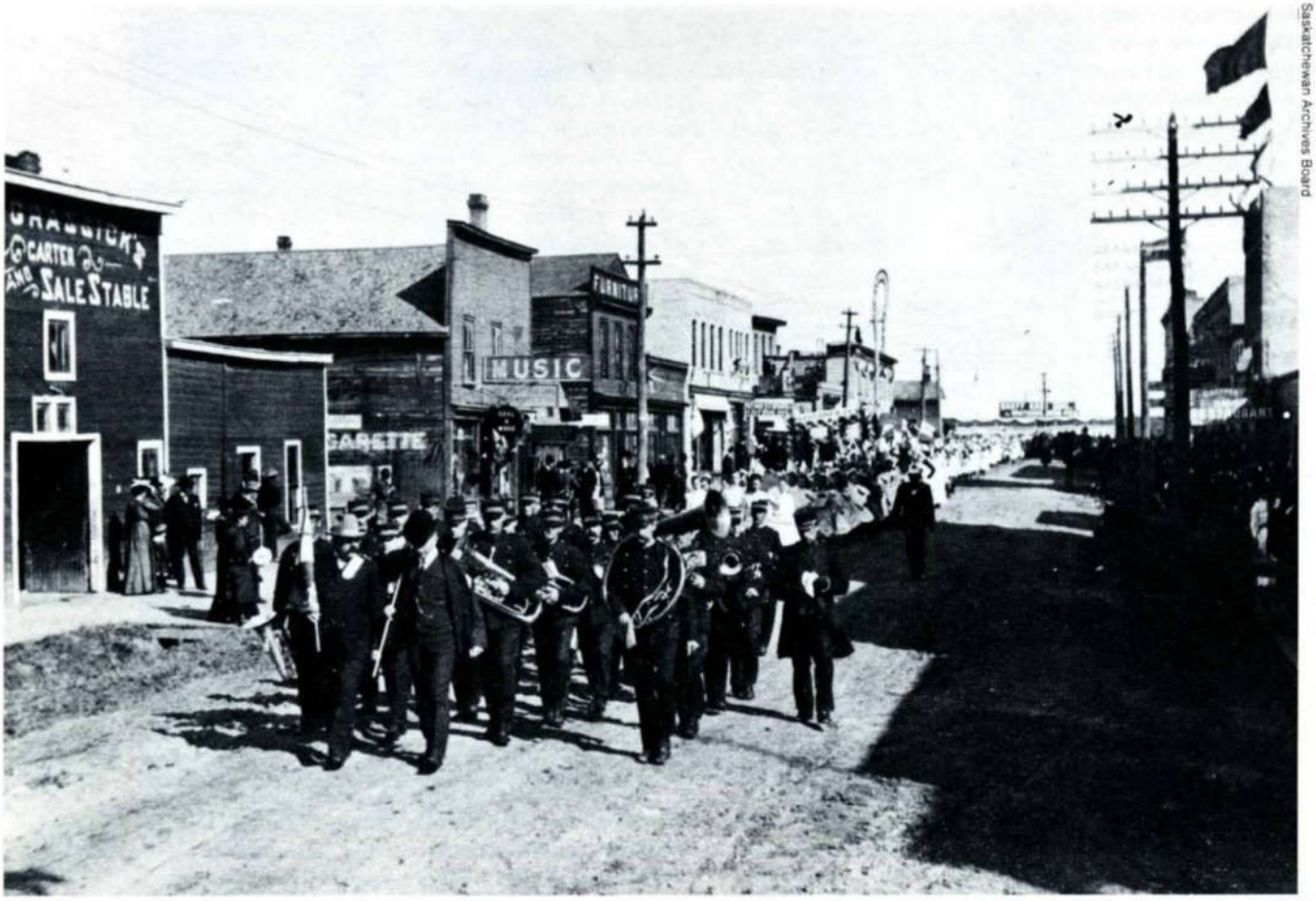
Haultain did not wait for the election or the negotiations; he knew what was wanted and needed and on 1 June 1904, he wrote to the Prime Minister, again itemizing what he considered as essentials in providing for the area. These included: application of the British North America Act as far as possible; adequate representation in both Houses of Parliament; transfer of the public domain with all the territorial rights; a subsidy similar to that given to other provinces; remuneration for that part of the public domain alienated by the Dominion for purely federal purposes; and placing the burden of the Canadian Pacific Railway exemptions entirely upon the federal government where it belonged.

The Prime Minister, on 21 February 1905, presented the House of Commons with two bills to establish self-government in the new provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta respectively. Haultain was pleased that the time had come for action but he was not pleased with the terms written into the Acts. The Bills had ignored a number of the points he had regarded as crucial.

There would be two provinces instead of one because, in the Prime Minister's words, the area was too big for a single province. Haultain's request for provincial control of public lands was refused because, as explained, the territory had been bought with federal funds and should remain the property of all Canadians. The Canadian Pacific Railway exemption from land taxation would remain and mines, minerals and forests would continue under federal control.

In the matter of schools, the thorniest issue of all, Sir Wilfrid begged for a charitable understanding in order to protect minorities and their right to pursue religious convictions in their own way. The school question, of course, was charged with emotion, leaving little room for compromise. Even Laurier's cabinet could not agree and the Honourable Clifford Sifton, from Manitoba, resigned.

Regina was named the provisional capital of Saskatchewan and, much to the distress of Calgarians, Edmonton was chosen to be the provisional capital of Alberta. Both provinces would have formal



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Inauguration Day in Regina, 4 September 1905. The parade passes along Scarth Street.

birth at the beginning of September, 1905.

Haultain, on 11 March, while the Bills were still under discussion in the House of Commons, wrote to the Prime Minister 'a final statement on the subject' — protesting the terms and objecting strongly to the Ottawa failure to discuss the contents of the Bills with him, at least not until a few hours before they were presented formally to the Commons.

'Why two provinces instead of one?' Haultain asked again. 'After careful consideration, I am more than ever convinced that there is no necessity for dividing the country into two provinces with the consesquent duplication of machinery and institutions. The Provincial machinery is elaborate and expensive and is more suitable to large areas and large populations. The new Territories have for a number of years been under one Government, performing most of the duties and exercising many of the more important powers of Provincial Governments and Legislatures. There has never been any suggestion that the Territorial machinery was in any way inadequate for the purposes for which it was created.'

Continuing his criticism, Haultain said: 'I must take strong exception to the way in which the subject of education has been treated both in the conferences and in the Bills. I must remind you that your proposition was not laid before my colleagues or myself until noon of the day upon which you introduced the Bills. . . . With respect to the question of education generally, you are no doubt aware that the position taken by us was that the Provinces should be left to deal with the subject exclusively [according] to the provisions of the British North America Act, thus putting them on the same footing as all other Provinces in the Dominion except Ontario and Quebec. I submit that Parliament is bound by the provisions of the B.N.A. Act in passing legislation of this kind. I therefore respectfully demand on behalf of the Territories that the same terms, and no others, imposed by the Queen in Council on the admission of Prince Edward Island and British Columbia be prescribed in this instance.'

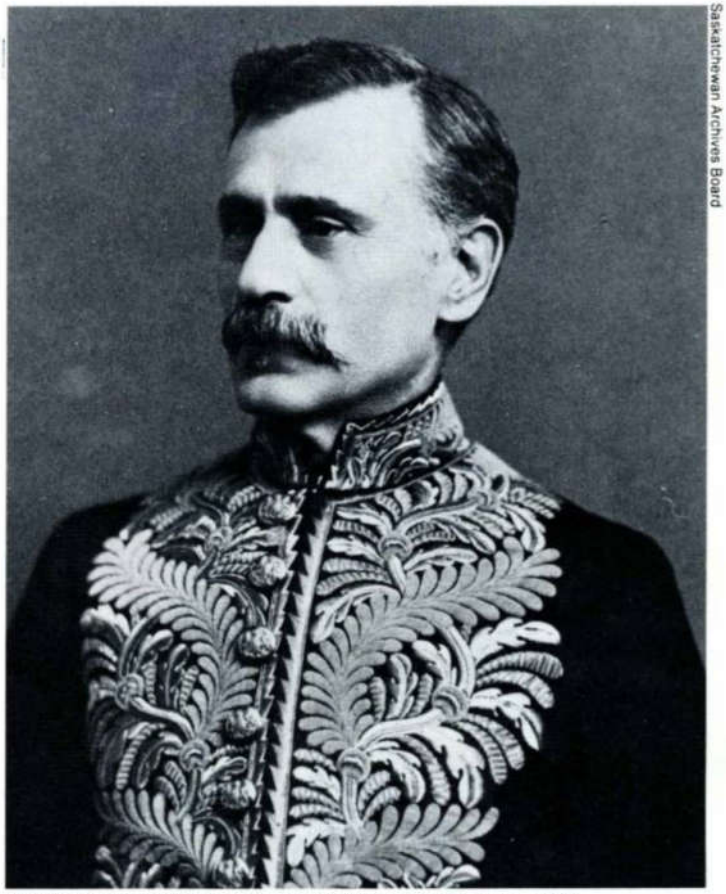
With a small change in the education sections, the two Bills were adopted by Parliament and given Royal Assent on 20 July. The new provinces would

come into existence at the beginning of September, 1905. They would inherit the laws of the North-West Territories until these were changed by the new legislatures, each of which would have 25 provincial legislators. Ottawa's next step was to appoint two Lieutenant-Governors. The appointments were announced just a few days before the inaugural date: George Hedley Vickers Bulyea for Alberta, and Amédée Emmanuel Forget for Saskatchewan. Both were active Liberals. Later, two active Liberals were appointed to the positions of provisional premiers: A. C. Rutherford for Alberta, and Walter Scott for Saskatchewan. Scott had occupied a seat in the House of Commons but was an admirer of Frederick Haultain's policies for the West until the two men drifted into opposition to each other.

Great preparations were made for the inaugural ceremonies at Edmonton on the first day of September and Regina on the fourth. Weather was mixed at Edmonton and many Calgary people found satisfaction in hearing that the provisional capital had several inches of snow. Photographs taken on the great day, however, show no snow and the program was conducted without a hitch. The new Lieutenant-Governor was sworn in and at the end of a great and memorable day, the Governor-General and the Prime Minister went on by train to Calgary and then to Regina to repeat their expressions of hope and pride and praise at the Saskatchewan capital.

And what of Haultain? The Liberal Government at Ottawa had passed him by. True, he was a Conservative at heart but nobody watching him in the Territorial Legislature would have guessed. He accepted party politics at the federal level and had been known to attend certain party meetings conducted on behalf of the national organization, but he discouraged party politics in provincial government and believed that a provincial legislature would function better in a no-party atmosphere. During his many years of territorial service, his administration was strictly non-partisan. At any rate after pestering the Government at Ottawa on behalf of the Territories, he was unpopular with Sir Wilfrid and Sir Wilfrid's party. The man who had given 18 years of service in the Territorial Council and Legislative Assembly and who had been the Premier and territorial statesman up to the last day of August, 1905, was then ignored by those in national authority.

Haultain's friends were disturbed by what they saw as a political loss and a national injustice. The view was expressed in *Saturday Night* in an August issue, 1905, that 'Canada has no stronger, straighter or more able administrator either in Federal, Provincial or Territorial politics. Yet, this strong, straight, able man, who has locally directed nearly every good thing that has been done for the Territories, is to be ousted from any share of the government of either of the two new provinces.'



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Amédée Emmanuel Forget, appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the new province of Saskatchewan.

Haultain chose to run in the first provincial election in Saskatchewan and became the Leader of the Opposition, continuing in that position until 1912 when he was appointed Chief Justice of Saskatchewan. More honours came: he was knighted in 1916 and as Sir Frederick Haultain he remained in the position of Chief Justice until 1937 and served many years as the distinguished and greatly loved Chancellor of the University of Saskatchewan.

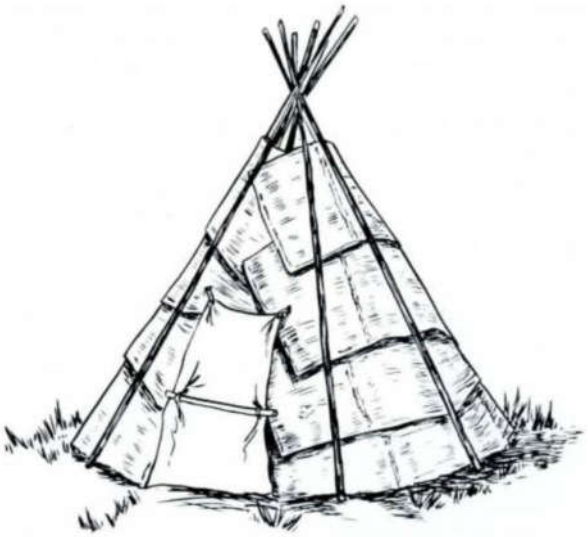
Unfortunately, Haultain and the huge part he played in giving shape to the West were too soon forgotten. With more justice in 1905, he would have been the premier of one of the new provinces and might well have gone on to federal politics to become a prime minister and an acknowledged statesman. That, of course, is for those who dream of 'what might have been'. One thing is certain: that anybody taking the time to study Haultain's role before and after the construction of the Twin Provinces will recognize him as the architect of it all, even though his blueprint was not followed diligently. ◆

Indian Life in Summer

Text by Edward S. Rogers
Illustrations by Lee R. Updike

Dr Rogers is Curator, Department of Ethnology, Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto.

The work of Lee Updike has been published in a number of books, the most recent being 'The First People'.



Summer lodge of the Micmac, covered with strips of birch-bark.

Pointed hat worn by Micmac women, who gathered shellfish, lobsters, mussels and clams from the coastal beaches in splint baskets (right).

THE SUMMER MONTHS were the time when living was easiest for the Indians of Canada. Because of an abundant and assured food supply, many of the native peoples could assemble in large gatherings where they renewed acquaintances and formed new friendships and alliances. It was a time also when many performed their major religious rituals.

The Micmac had left their interior winter camps during the spring and had moved to coastal camps where they would spend the summer. They now feasted frequently upon a variety of shellfish, lobsters, mussels and clams that could easily be secured at low tide. To obtain them, all that was needed was a digging stick and a basket.

Waterfowl provided an additional source of food. The Micmac took advantage of ducks that rafted in flocks at night in sheltered bays. To secure the birds, the hunters, two to a canoe, drifted out among the resting birds. The ducks took no notice, for the canoes had the appearance of logs moving with the tide. The hunters lit torches and waved them above the canoes. The ducks, startled and disoriented, rose but did not leave the site. They circled the torches, often becoming singed and falling into the water; others were knocked out of the air with sticks. The fallen ducks were retrieved and soon each canoe was loaded.

Porpoise frequenting the estuaries of rivers were killed with guns and harpoons. Occasionally a moose hunt was undertaken. When stalking large game the hunter wore the skin of an animal as a disguise. If an animal was killed some distance upstream from the encampment, the successful hunter fashioned a crude boat from sticks and the hide in which he, along with the meat, could float downstream to camp. Moose and deer were also captured with snares. As different

berries became ripe they were gathered and if abundant, some would be preserved for later use.

During the warm weather little clothing was worn, usually only a waist girdle. Shelter was minimal; the bark-covered conical lodge was the principal dwelling at this time of year.

Summer was the time when war parties might take to the field. The plans for the attack would be approved or vetoed by a medicine man who foretold the outcome. Armament carried by each warrior was limited to a shield of plaited basswood, a club, a knife and a bow and arrow. Before departing the participants performed a war dance and held a feast of dog meat. If the raid proved successful, enemies might be killed or taken captive. When a warrior was killed his opponent would, if possible, secure his head. The taking of only the scalp was a custom introduced to the Micmac by the Europeans who paid a bounty for each one. Any captives were brought home and kept as slaves.

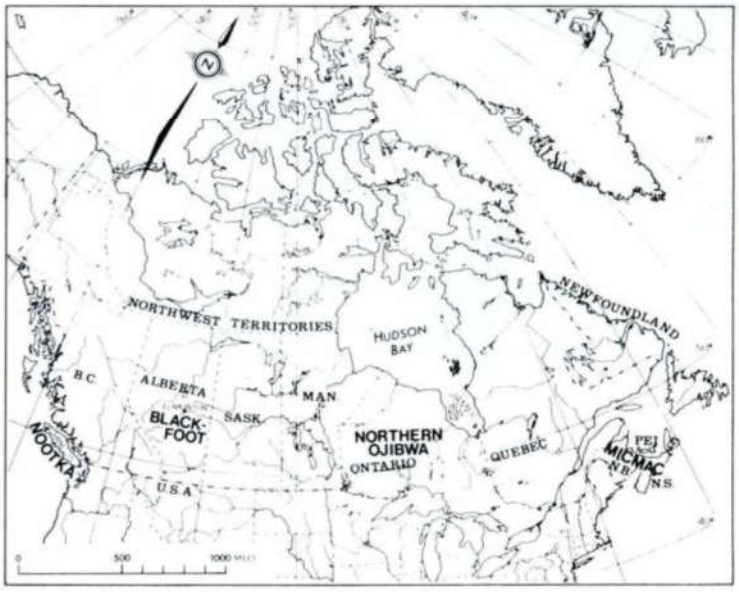
Feasts were held when a war party was preparing to leave on a raid and at the time of a marriage; prolonged feasting took place when the chiefs of each settlement met to discuss tribal affairs. These gatherings of the headmen were accompanied by great pomp and ceremony. Games of various kinds were played, but not exclusively on these occasions.

The Northern Ojibwa, much like the Micmac, assembled during the summer months in groups that were usually larger than those which made up the winter hunting and trapping camps. As spring drew to a close the smaller groups who had lived together began to slowly shift their camps closer to the summer gathering centre. By the end of June, all were likely to have arrived. The assembly point was located along the shores of one of the larger lakes within the territory of the band. For short periods of time as many as one hundred or more Indians might be encamped at their particular gathering centre.

Families were constantly coming and going. Some might be travelling to one of the nearby trading posts of the Hudson's Bay Company (only occasionally did free traders enter the lands of the Northern Ojibwa) where they might spend a few weeks trading their furs for ammunition, traps, kettles, axes, and blankets. At the same time they might arrange for the local missionary to perform weddings or baptize their children. Sometimes the men left to work on the fur brigades. The women would remain behind and care for themselves and their children by fishing, setting snares for small game, and picking berries.

Although, as a rule, food was more readily available during the summer, there were times when this was not the case. The Northern Ojibwa suffered hardship during those summers when fishing fell off because of the poor survival of a particular age class of fish or because the hare cycle was at its low point.

Northern Ojibwa man.



The situation would be further compounded if, at the same time, the blueberry crop failed, for this was an important source of food for the Ojibwa.

With the coming of the warm weather the Ojibwa could expend less effort in securing fuel and building homes. Now a small fire for cooking was all that was necessary.

For each group that assembled at a gathering centre, one individual was looked upon as the leader. He was a man who was respected for his wisdom, accomplishments and superior abilities; he was also a leading religious practitioner. His words of advice

Blackfoot bands gather to take part in the communal bison hunt and the Sun Dance.

would be acted upon only so long as he maintained the respect of the people. Families were free to leave the group at any time and ally themselves with another leader. This decision was made by the family heads who wielded autocratic powers. Children at any age were unlikely to disobey their parents regardless of the issue involved. The larger gatherings of Northern Ojibwa lasted for only a few weeks. With the approach of fall, families dispersed to their fall camps.

Summer was the season when scattered bands of Blackfoot came together to participate in the communal bison hunt and the religious ceremony, the Sun Dance or the Medicine Dance. The gathering commenced in June when the condition of the bison bulls was prime and continued for several weeks until all the bands were assembled. For the Blackfoot, a summer encampment might consist of many hundreds, sometimes over a thousand people. The

Ceremonial bison skull.

Blackfoot woman wearing a Sun Dance headdress.

A traditional Nootka whaling crew: six paddlers, a steersman and the harpooner.

encampment had a formal layout; the tipis were erected in a large circle and each band had its allotted spot. The people renewed old friendships, established new ones, bartered horses and ceremonially transferred painted lodges and sacred bundles. The men's societies held their performances and the young men courted the young women. The encampment was under the command of the tribal chief who, in council with the lesser chiefs and headmen of each band, was responsible for the management of the encampment — the moves that would be made, the communal hunt, and the Sun Dance. They discussed tribal problems, made plans for the future and chose one of the men's societies to police the camp and the hunt.

During the summer months, large herds of bison moved through the countryside. The Blackfoot depended on this animal for many products: hides for shields and tipi covers, bones for scrapers, horns for drinking vessels and war clubs, sinew for thread and meat for food. The most important of all these items was the tongues from bison bulls, for as many as three hundred tongues might be needed for the proper performance of the Sun Dance.

The bison hunt was a communal affair with all the camp participating in one way or another. At this time no one was allowed to hunt on his own for fear that the herds might be frightened away. Anyone caught doing so had his property destroyed or confiscated. On the day of the hunt, the people moved out to the vicinity of a herd that was in a favourable position where experienced hunters could direct the animals towards a precipice. The women and children placed themselves in lines on either side of the path of the bison but out of sight of the animals. As the bison came opposite them, the first of the women and children rose from concealment, waving robes and frightening the animals forward. Successively, other women and children revealed themselves, urging the animals ahead with increasing speed to the edge of the cliff. The animals in the lead attempted to avoid the danger but those behind, unaware of the drastic change in the terrain, pressed onward forcing those ahead over the precipice. Soon many had fallen to their death or had become maimed — easy targets for the hunters. Once the drive was finished the work of butchering the carcasses began. The meat was removed from the bones and placed on stages to dry in the clear prairie air. The hides were scraped and dried ready for further treatment at a later date.

Once sufficient bison tongues had been secured, a site was selected for the Sun Dance, which generally took place in August. The entire encampment packed and made ready for the trip to the site. The tribal chief announced the move on the previous evening, and all families broke camp together. The Blackfoot travelled in all their finery, with their weapons and shields displayed, and their horses decorated with beaded riding gear. Horses were essential to transport the quantity of goods possessed by the Blackfoot; a large family, one with more than five adults, required at least 15 to 20 horses. The tipi covers, bison-robe bedding and willow backrests were packed on travois, drawn by horses. The dried meat and fat were placed

Nootka canoe bailer.

in hide bags that were suspended from the horn of the women's saddles, one on each side. The medicine-pipe owner and the chiefs, accompanied by their families, led the march. In advance of them rode the scouts. Active warriors rode on the flanks and in the rear, always fully armed in case of an encounter with an enemy. If the party had to cross a river, 'bull boats' were made of supple poles covered with bison hides. The move was completed in four daily marches.

The people spent from eight to ten days at the Sun Dance encampment. At the end of this time, the tribal gathering broke up and the bands dispersed, each on its own to engage in the fall hunt.

With the arrival of summer, the Nootka shifted their residential location from the inner shores of the bays to sites on the outer coast of Vancouver Island. There they set up their lodges, using boards taken from their homes in the winter village. From these camps the Nootka would hunt whales, search for hair seals, sea lions and sea otters, and fish — especially for halibut. The Nootka also gathered the eggs of sea birds, giant mussels (from the shells they fashioned women's knives and whaling harpoon-heads) and giant kelp which was used as fish lines.

Hunting whales — the California grey whale being an important species sought — was an elaborate affair. Before the hunt, various rituals were performed and taboos observed in order to ensure the successful outcome of the expedition. The whaling crew had to undergo purification of their bodies, minds and spirits. The crew consisted of eight men who formed a well-trained team. Each knew exactly what to do at all times, for a mistake could mean disaster for all concerned. Each canoe consisted of six paddlers, a steersman and the harpooner. The dugouts were of superb design, approximately thirty-six feet in length, capable of being employed for miles out to sea on the Pacific Ocean. Once a whale had been sighted an approach was made to place the harpooner alongside the beast. This was a dangerous undertaking, for a mature grey whale was five to ten feet longer than the Nootka canoe. After the animal had been harpooned, the line, with the attached seal-skin floats on the end, was let out to prevent the whale from sounding deeply. When the whale had exhausted itself it was killed with lance thrusts.

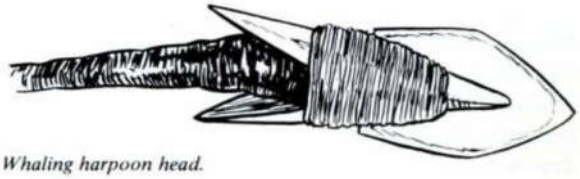
Besides these subsistence activities, the coastal waters of the Nootka territory supported a significant dentalia fishery. These small, horn-shaped shells were much in demand for adorning clothing and making necklaces or bands that could be worn as headdresses and trailers. They enhanced the appearance and indicated wealth.

Dentalia grew widely along the Northwest coast in deep water, except in the seas about the Nootka area, where, for some reason, it occurred at shallower depths. Only a few families had the right to engage in dentalia fishing and they jealously guarded the knowledge of where the beds were located. To secure the shells, the collector proceeded to his dentalia beds and there anchored his dugout by means of a stone attached to a long line of giant kelp stems. A pole with a number of splints at one end, like a broom, was lowered into the water. Additional poles were attached until the bottom was within striking distance. A board through which the pole passed just above the splints was put in place and weighted with several stones. The collector then thrust the pole downward, into the bed of dentalia.

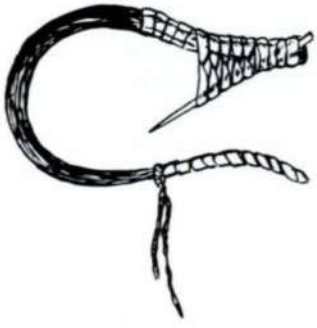
The weight of the stones tied to the board caused it to be forced downward over the upper part of the splints as the device struck the ocean bottom. The splints were in this manner compressed against the shells. Then the device was pulled upward, each pole in turn being removed until the distal end was reached. It was a tedious process, for not more than one or two shells were secured each time the rods were lowered into the water. The Nootka supplied the coastal tribes to the north and south with nearly all of their dentalia.

As elsewhere among the Canadian Indians, life during the summer months was relatively easy for the Nootka. Food was plentiful, little clothing was needed, and their house construction was uncomplicated.

As summer began to merge into fall, the Nootka, Micmac, Blackfoot and Northern Ojibwa began to plan for a new season of activity. ◆



Whaling harpoon head.



Halibut hook.

An Artist REMEMBERS

IN THE SOUTH-EAST CORNER of Saskatchewan, between Moose Mountain Provincial Park and the town of Carlyle, is the White Bear Indian Reserve. It is the home of over 900 Plains Cree, Saulteaux and Assiniboine Indians. It is also the home of the talented Plains Cree artist, Michael Lonechild.

Michael Lonechild was born on the reserve on 30 October 1955, the son of George and Irene Lonechild. He is married to Gwen Little Chief, from the same reserve; they have two sons.

The main subject matter of Lonechild's art is the historic and recent past of his people. He paints about how it used to be when his people roamed the plains hunting the bison and fighting their enemies. He also depicts their life on the reserve as it was during the first half of this century. On his numerous canvasses he shows how his people went about their everyday lives in all four seasons.

White Bear Reserve is an area of great physical beauty. It possesses rolling hills, a large lake, numerous sloughs, and there is thick bush everywhere. These are portrayed in their every aspect in Lonechild's art. In his winter scenes one perceives the bitter cold of Saskatchewan in the dry snow, frozen bush, brilliant blue sky and the barren but haunting beauty of the landscape.

Laura Burke, art critic of the Regina *Leader-Post* states: 'This artist knows his countryside well. Not only is he true to the colours of rough prairie grass and weatherbeaten boards, he is intensely aware of their texture. It is the intimate knowledge of one who has

'My old home.'

By John Anson Warner

Dr Warner is associate professor, department of sociology and social studies, University of Regina. He is author of 'The Life and Art of the North American Indian' and, with Thecla Bradshaw, 'A Cree Life: the Art of Allen Sapp'.

'Killing a bull elk.'

'Deep snow.'

'Fixing the wagon.'

'Thawing out: good time for muskrats.'

'Feeding the horses.'

'Winter hunter.'

'Coming home from hunting.'

'Helping out on a neighbour's farm.'

'Going to Grandma's to watch TV.'

'Bringing in a load of wood.'

spent his boyhood lying in just such grass or scaling the dilapidated shingle roof of just such a shed.'

Originally the Indians of this region were a bison-hunting people who roamed over the entire extent of southern Saskatchewan. Before the eighteenth century they lived in the northern forest regions of Manitoba and Saskatchewan as hunters, fishermen and gatherers. With the advent of the fur trade in the seventeenth century they became trappers and middlemen traders to tribes deeper in the hinterlands. As early as 1730, according to the explorer Sieur de La Vérendrye, several bands of these tribes began to evince an interest in the prairies. Attracted by the lure of the bison herds, they began to dwell in areas proximate to the prairies. These southernmost bands went out onto the plains in summer for bison hunts and then, with the beginning of winter, retreated into the more sheltered environment of the parklands.

Gradually, over the latter portions of the eighteenth century and through the nineteenth century, these tribes began to spend more and more time on the southern prairies. They hunted the bison for their own needs and to supply the more northerly fur-trading posts. As they came to spend more time on the plains, they assumed the cultural characteristics common to most plains-dwelling native people. This era has intrigued the imagination of Lonechild and some of his most recent work has focussed quite strongly on this period.

The classic era of the Plains Indians was short-lived, however. In 1874 the chiefs of Indian bands in southern Saskatchewan signed the Fort Qu'Appelle Treaty whereby they surrendered this vast region to the Crown in return for reserve homelands and promises of economic support, education, and health programs. Such a destiny seemed inevitable since bison herds were already thinning out to an alarming extent by the 1870s; by 1880 the herds were extinct as a reliable food source.

After they began reserve life in the 1870s, Lonechild's people forsook their traditional tipis and built log cabins much like the settlers around them. With the extinction of the bison herds they had to rely on small game hunting and gathering in order to exist.

Want and starvation were a frequent presence on the reserve in the 1880s and 1890s. The government tried to encourage agriculture but this was a strange undertaking for a people who had just previously embraced such a different sort of culture. Drought and mismanagement often sabotaged their early efforts to grow crops. Nevertheless, some amount of agriculture, horse breeding and cattle raising came to supplement the Indian economy. Young men took jobs off the reserve as cowboys and harvest crew members in order to supplement family incomes. Sometimes the men would go into the bush in winter to cut down trees, not only for their stoves but often for sale to people in the surrounding communities.

Today, because of the natural beauty of their reserve, the White Bear people have brought some measure of economic development to the reserve by encouraging a tourist and recreational industry. The Band Council has opened up sites on the lakeshore as lease property for summer cottages and recently an arts and crafts co-operative has opened to sell bead-work and handcrafted hide clothing.

It is Lonechild's fundamental artistic purpose to portray the land, the history, and the recent past of his people. As Lonechild explains it: 'I like to paint on the reserve. Soon it will be changed. In 10 years, this will all be gone. And I like to paint the old people. But they don't always like me to do it. Usually I have to paint them from memory.' In Cree culture old people are a revered and respected group whose ideas and opinions are highly valued by the younger generation. These elders continue to serve a vital role in teaching the young (and often in raising them) and serving as a source of knowledge for those who have not yet accumulated the wisdom of age. Hence, despite their reticence and shyness, Lonechild has sought to commit their images to canvas before they pass on.

Lonechild is largely a self-taught painter. His formal education was pursued at the White Bear Reserve Day School and the Punnichy High School (near the Gordon's Reserve where he has numerous friends). While studying in Punnichy, he was influenced by the narrative-realist style of a local white artist, Ernest Luthi. While Lonechild received some tutoring from Luthi, the primary influence on his work seems to have come from Allen Sapp, the brilliant Plains Cree painter of the Red Pheasant Reserve near North Battleford, Saskatchewan. Both in terms of subject matter and approach, Sapp has served as the model for Lonechild's art. Sapp depicts his people's life on the reserves in the 1930s and 1940s; his work is now internationally known.

As with several of the other Plains Cree painters of Saskatchewan — including Allen Sapp, Sanford Fisher, and Henry Beaudry — Lonechild's approach is that of narrative realism. His subjects are of a nostalgic recreation of nature and social life on one Saskatchewan reserve prior to the 1960s.

Lonechild prefers acrylic paints on canvas and canvas board as his medium. He takes long walks over the reserve, familiarizes himself with history through books and periodicals, and listens to the stories told by the 'elders' as to how it was in the past. Armed with these impressions and information, he works at home, combining his sources with an imagination of his own.

As an ethnographic testament, Lonechild's art is a valuable record of the land and people from which he springs. But more than that, his evocative paintings have a universal appeal: all can relate to his scenes of nature and the day-to-day lives of a pastoral people.◆

Whitefish G-63

Text by
RICHARD SAVAGE

Photos by
PHILIP ORMOND

Richard Savage and Philip Ormond of Penticton, B.C., have done photographic features for periodicals, and films for the National Film Board. They are writing a second book on wildlife.

The seismic crew, gathering information to determine the location of the next site.

The flare: signal of success at the end of exploratory drilling.

WHITEFISH G-63 is a temporary speck of man and material on frozen Hazen Strait between Melville and Lougheed Islands: 500 tons of drilling gear on an ice platform twenty-two feet thick and some sixty or so men, including testers and visiting firemen from boardrooms and the press.

It is a wildcat well of natural gas — one of three developed by Panarctic Oil that are commanding the attention of an energy-anxious country. If the president of Panarctic, Charles Hetherington, is right in his prophecies, it is one of the wells that can make Canada self-sufficient for at least a part of the forseeable future. Sixteen trillion cubic feet of gas worth $68 billion if brought to sale at the end of this decade, have already been discovered. By 1995, Panarctic projects the discovery of sixty trillion more.

The figures, the complications and the implications are involved. They are rarely discussed at Whitefish G-63 where there is little patience with whatever goes beyond basics. Life here may be bizarre but it is frank and fundamental. One cares about the ability of each to work with the other; about co-operation and harmony, however crude; about the private dreams that have brought him here. As mates they laugh and talk of piston rods and playmates; they eat, sleep, fraternize and work. Work is the leading priority and everything else is secondary, something to be tolerated until the next shift. Some continue through the years to return until the routine is impossible to break, the sense of belonging quite as addictive as that in the army. Some rise through the ranks, one day to recognize

Hercules aircraft bring in everything — including the base itself.

Huey Acheson, senior authority and a veteran of thirty-three years.

Polar bear: intelligent, powerful, and totally unafraid of man and his constructions.

Inuit workers, part of the team on Whitefish G-63.

Drilling operations.

that nothing else offers the same sly inducements. Others work until an abiding ambition can be bought and then they leave.

It is a young man's job, incredibly hard, dominantly physical, psychologically stressful. The cold bites with the teeth of an angry fox; mutilation and death are the penalties for carelessness or mental lapse. The immensity of ice and horizon surrounding them imprisons each within himself; the world beyond the tiny settlement they have tinkered together fades into obscurity. Work remains — and laughter — the logical escape from a lifestyle no less confining than that of a submarine.

It is the need for laughter that sends the new boy aloft in -40° weather with instructions to pour water on the cables to keep them from overheating! And it was laughter at themselves that rollicked a crew when another new boy thought it might be better to pour oil on the cables and drenched the men below.

A young man's story of mistaking a large piece of billowing white plastic for a polar bear was told as a joke but old timers did not find it funny. They recalled instances when polar bears appeared as explosions of white to kill and eat luckless comrades. Male bears may weigh over 1,000 pounds, are one of the largest of all terrestrial carnivores, are fearless and fast. Speeds of fifteen miles an hour are easy for them, but not easy for a man, particularly one burdened with parka and boots. Everyone is alert to protect the rig but bears do slip through. It is not uncommon for one of them to send an entire gang clawing their way up the rig.

The threat is never-ending. One man setting lights on the landing strip turned to find an adult bear fifty feet away. He survived by spending the entire night keeping an oil drum between himself and the predator. Luckily the bear was curious, not hungry. A card game ended in abrupt panic when a polar bear poked its head through the window directly behind one of the players. The impulsive chase of another bear by some of the men with their cameras ended when the huge creature tired of the run and turned to stand his ground. Man's superiority lies in his inventions, they learned, not in personal stature.

Less fortunately, and not at Whitefish, a fork-lift operator saw a large snow drift at the side of the road unexpectedly stand to reveal itself as a bear. It broke his back with a single swipe and dragged him away.

Other stories give a gentler insight into the first hesitant introductions of man to the Arctic. Seals come up out of the water where the pipe enters it and play tag with the men, often trying to send them into the sea. At Rae Point a pet husky mates with a wolf that is tolerant of the rancid human smell that most animals recognize and despise.

The native men of the Arctic, the Inuit, are part of

Whitefish G-63, but prefer to remain to themselves, doing the yard work, being outside, leaving the drilling to the madmen from the south. Working for oil companies gives them more money than they have seen before, but it does not make any great impression. Whether they return to the rig after time at home is always moot. Like the land to which they are native they are unpredictable to the crew, but they know what they are doing. The family structure is more important than work and one is loathe to question that morality.

What kind of men are these others, then, the pale strangers who endure in an alien land? What breed can remain oriented and purposeful where clocks turn but light remains and darkness never comes?

They are farm boys mostly, used to working with their hands. They are not awed by the size of the rig, they are accustomed to the demand for pushing their bodies to the limits of exertion, and they are not afraid of the clangorous, frenetic circumstances under which they must perform. Fear accounts for more accidents than do acts of culpability. Alcohol and drugs are blameless — prohibited from arctic bases.

Boys from the farms. They have that admirable faculty of being able to concentrate on the job at hand without amenities, siestas or diversified attractions. Their backgrounds are varied and those at Whitefish represent the groups on other rigs scattered through the reaches of this last frontier. Some of the men are starting over in life, waiting out the wounds of a broken marriage. Some are running; some are little more than tourists lured by a northern experience; some are hoping for a challenge; some for a career.

At the top of the order the emphasis on seniority has declined. Youth and education are taking over where grit and gristle once prevailed. The crown princes are versed in science, conversant with instruments and technology.

With them still are the faithful, the experienced, the true professionals. At Whitefish the foreman earned his spurs over thirty-three years on the ice. He had been a farm boy too, but he came home from the war to a spread that had been hailed out. His wage now is considerably higher than it was in 1947 when he collected 85¢ an hour. Still, he remembers those days as a time when enthusiasm in the business was high and competition was keen.

It is not adventure that sings the most seductive song; it is money. The base rate is not exorbitant but it is good. The frosting is in the daily allowance of twenty dollars for an 'arctic bonus' and in the overtime. The shifts are twelve hours on, 'eight to eight, back to back', twelve hours off, seven days a week. There is little else to do but work and when the initial glamour of the arctic situation fades, the reason for being there is written in the bank book.

One lad in his early twenties has taken full advantage of the boom. By studying and making use of tax breaks, he has managed to put more than $100,000 into a family farm.

Two brothers from Prince Edward Island have bought a business for their father. A direct descendant of the eighteenth-century arctic explorer Samuel Hearne is 'paying off his credit cards'. He wrote, published and distributed his own poetry until somebody lowered the boom. Like others he came for the dollars but now finds himself in a creative void that may soon end the life of 'two weeks in, one week out'.

Not all are hounded or visionary. Some merely enjoy throwing their earnings into 'eating, drinking and being merry' as soon as they reach Edmonton or Calgary.

Lastly, there is the quiet, reserved anachronism, the man who has a mystique about him, not because of what he says but because of what he does not say. Considerate, helpful, formal of speech despite the plethora of profanity that rages everywhere, he speaks knowingly of Europe and of history. He is the one, the inevitable someone whose desire for privacy leads to speculation, to conjecture and questions that one might think would never touch this small spot where distance, seclusion, transiency and anonymity are part and parcel of life.

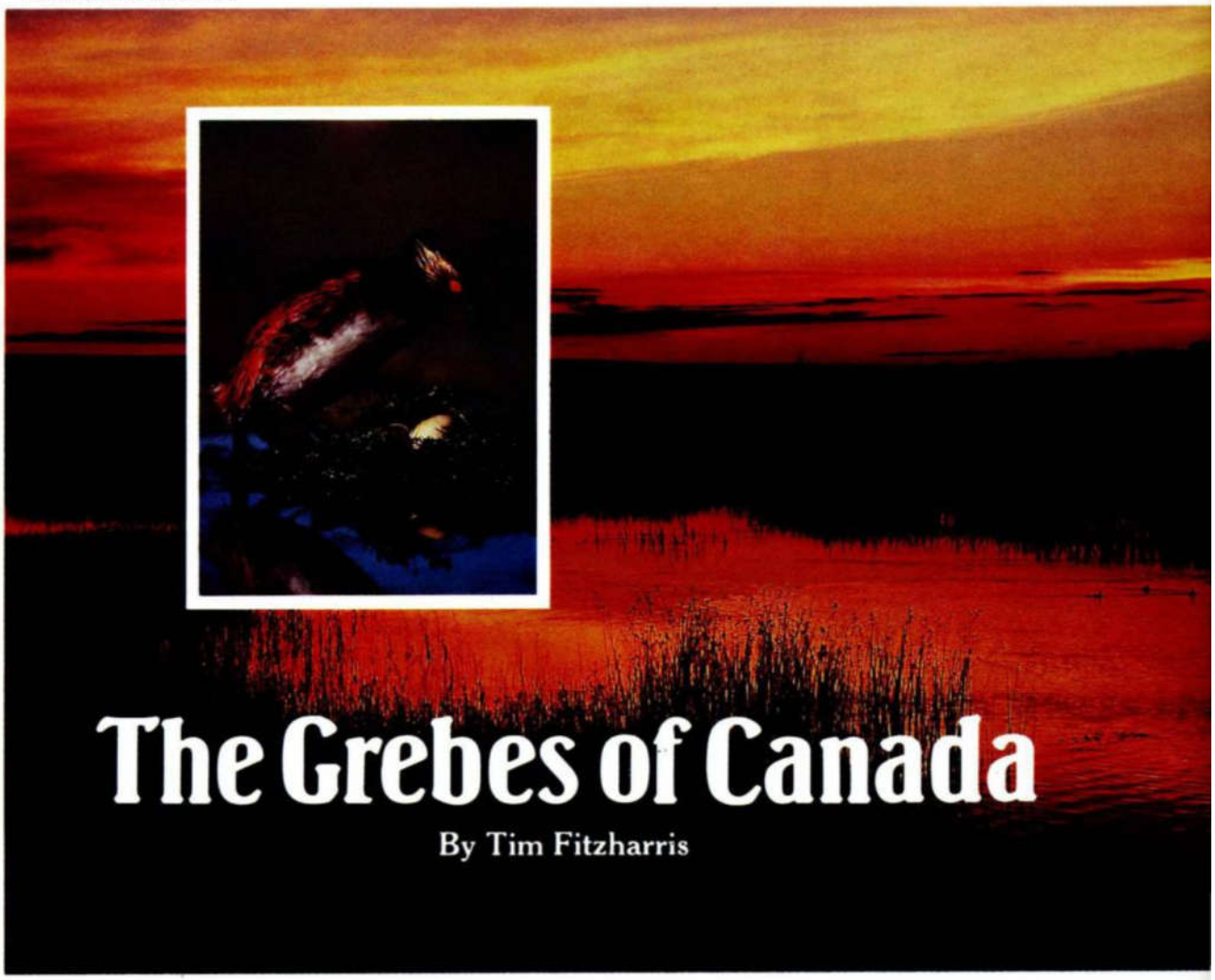
Strangely enough, executives and roughnecks exist on the same continuum, anchors of the ends. Many of the decision-makers who sit in the tall towers know what a wet trip is. They have paid their dues and they know well how indispensable are the men at the core of the industry: those brawny workers drenched in mud, so tired their muscles are in spasm. From leather chairs they can still empathize with the lonely figure that stands hypnotized by the never-dying sun, staring towards some unspoken remembrance far beyond the touching of sky and ice.

Each knows that a spinning drill table can become slippery, that one mistake can cost a hand or a life. Each knows that an injury can degenerate into a fatality if the weather locks in and planes cannot fly. Each knows the frustrations of a 'freeze hole' when no one is allowed in or out until confidential information is complete, a process that can take months. Each knows the paralyzing fear of a blowout which on land can melt a steel rig in just over three hours and which on ice can send everything in seconds to the bottom of the sea.

When cool heads prevail it is known that progress is essential to survival. The search for and development of oil and natural gas deposits are part of that progress, in the Arctic and elsewhere, and if an immediate, substantial, viable energy alternative cannot be recommended, such exploration must continue. ◆

The heart of the operations. The rig is fourteen stories tall and weighs 500 tons. It rests on a styrofoam base and an ice platform that is twenty-two feet thick.

Eared Grebes on a prairie slough.
Inset: Eared Grebe at nest.



The Grebes of Canada

By Tim Fitzharris

SWATHS OF MIST twist through the beds of cattails. The water is as still as glass. From the fog comes an assortment of sounds — splashings, gurgles, a cackle of frog song, hoots, a watery snort. A brontosaurus looms up in the haze, and in shifting its position the massive body starts a long, slow, tidal wave rolling across the marsh. In a few seconds it reaches a floating nest anchored in a clump of bullrushes. On the nest a grebe calmly rocks in the turbulence, intent on warming the four round, white eggs.

The eggs hatch. Eighty million years pass. An infusion of whistles, quacks, trills and honks has greatly changed the sound of the marsh. The giant reptile is gone. A canoe paddle now gently stirs the water. Click, whirr . . . click, whirr . . . . But on a floating nest the grebe still sits quietly. It yawns at the camera and dozes off. Through the long tunnel of lens I am able to study its primitive form. In life-style and appearance it differs little from its ancient, cretaceous ancestor. The viewfinder becomes a time machine that looks back through history and prehistory. My breathing slows. The grebe rouses and arches its body awkwardly above the clutch of eggs. It drags a few green sprigs over the treasure before slipping into the water. A scream rips into the solitude. Triceratops? No. A Mack truck — sounding its horn from the four lanes of tarmac that lead into Calgary's sweating industrial sector. My mind catapults back to the twentieth century and I remember it is time I headed home for breakfast. The grebe does not pause from its hunting as I paddle softly towards the shore.

Grebes share with the loons the distinction of being representatives of the two oldest living bird families in North America. Except for Quebec's northern

regions, the island of Newfoundland and the approximate eastern half of the Northwest Territories, a member of the family Podicipedidae (grebes) occurs in every part of Canada. The Western Grebe and the Eared Grebe are the characteristic species of Western Canada, breeding primarily on the myriad lakes, sloughs and potholes of the prairie provinces and British Columbia. The distribution of the Red-necked Grebe and the Horned Grebe is somewhat broader and includes the Yukon, a portion of the Northwest Territories and extends in a wide sweep across northern Ontario almost to the Quebec border. The shyest member of the family, the Pied-billed Grebe, breeds from coast to coast in the southern half of the country.

The graceful proportions of the Western Grebe earned the sobriquet 'swan grebe' from early explorers, and in many localities the dingy, pint-sized

Red-necked Grebe.

Horned Grebe.

Pied-billed Grebe, winter plumage.

Pied-billed Grebe bears the nickname of 'marsh rabbit'. Despite the superficial dissimilarities these names suggest, the grebes show amazing anatomical uniformity beneath their densely feathered skins. A modicum of first-hand observation of the behaviour patterns of the different species also leaves little doubt as to the close relationship of these birds.

My earliest recollection of a grebe dates back to eight or nine years ago. I had just become enthused with a sport new to me called bird-watching. Marshes were rife with bird life — so my field guide stated —and as a result I had stationed myself in a stand of cattails near my home in southern Ontario, waiting for the creatures to make their appearance. The stillness was suddenly broken by an eerie, jungle chanting that seemed to be lifted straight from the sound-track of 'Tarzan Meets the Amazons'. I've heard many grebes since then — the effeminate

Western Grebe.

Tim Fitzharris, of Victoria, B.C., is a free-lance wildlife photographer whose work has appeared in a number of major wildlife publications. At present he is working on a nature photography guide book for amateur photographers, and a book on birds of North America that feed or nest in wet habitats.

Eared Grebe threatening at nest.

Eared Grebes mating.

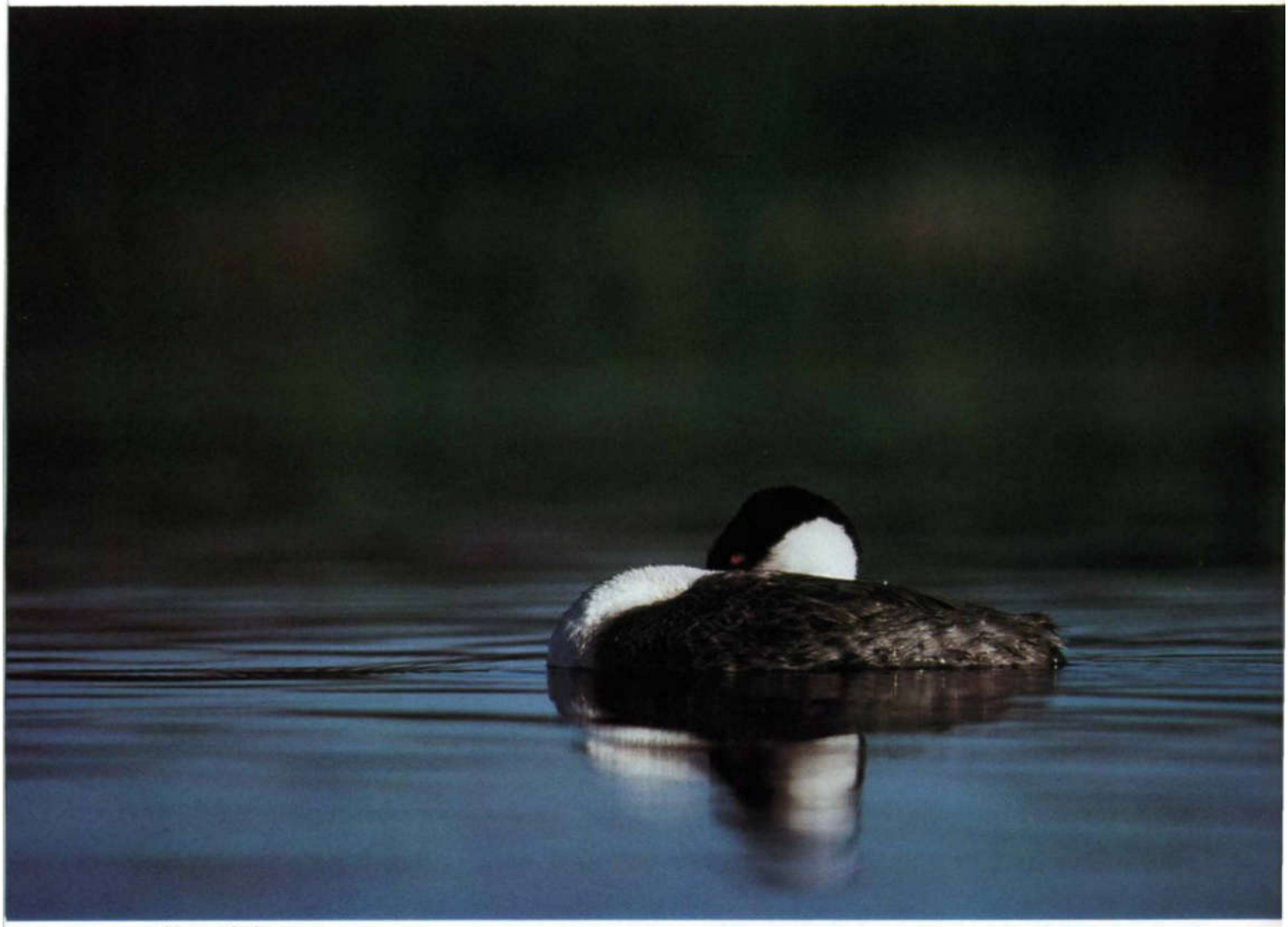
. . . with new egg.

. . . hatching.

peepings of the Western, the whistled chirps of the Eared, and the stuttering brays of the Red-necked —but that first serenade of the Pied-billed Grebe conjured up visions of dark spectres and it took a while before my vision narrowed to the drab-coloured sprite that floated immobile a few metres from my feet. As I stared, it emitted several more cackling hoots and then sank straight into the water causing a faint ripple that quickly dissipated over the flat, mirrored surface.

A grebe's aquatic prowess is a marvel that is seldom observed. When on the surface, it can plane lightly along at a brisk walking pace. If it spots a subsurface meal, it lances its beak downward through the water; a swift stroke of the feet and the rest of the body arches upward and curls the grebe gracefully into the depths. By drawing its feathers in tightly to the body and expelling air from internal cavities, the grebe can increase its specific gravity so that only its head (if anything) is left to periscope the surroundings. Once submerged, the specialized physical structures enable it to swim with the swiftest frogs or fishes. The skeletal framework is elongated, extending posteriorly to provide protection for vital organs when operating in the excessive pressures of deep water. The breast feathers are thick, soft and satin-smooth, while the dorsal plumage lies in dense hair-like strands. The grebe preens to keep this covering well greased and in top condition, enabling it to slip through the water with little resistance. The only visible parts of the legs are the scaled and very stoutly fused foot bones and the highly specialized toes. The thrusting, muscular portion of the leg is sheathed in the skin and feathers of the body proper, and mounted far to the rear for added streamlining and direct transfer of propulsion. The long toes are lobed and the horn-like material splays out to grab the water on the power stroke and folds up on the recovery stroke. Those who have had an opportunity to hold a Pied-billed Grebe report that its feet appear to churn the air with the rapidity of a hummingbird's wings. Unlike many other birds, a grebe's eyes are situated to the front of the head so that when hunting underwater at high speed, its streamline is not upset by the necessity of turning the head from side to side in order to track the prey.

In 1840, Audubon was able to study the underwater movements of several grebes held captive in his bathtub, and reports that the short wings were used in harmony with the foot action (much in the manner of a puffin) to propel the birds about the tub. Alvin R. Cahn describes the submarine movements of a Red-necked Grebe that he was able to observe through a hole in the ice of Cayuga Lake, New York, in 1912. 'The speed which is developed underwater is marvellous, at times being almost impossible to follow its movements, which were so rapid that the



Western Grebe at rest.

bird appeared more like a large, grey fish darting about.' From ancestral archaeopteryx, a denizen of trees and cliffsides, the grebe has reversed the avian trend towards land-based aerial flight and followed its reptilian heritage back to a life-style almost totally dependent on water.

When taking off, a grebe's stubby wings must battle frantically to drag its body out of the water. The lobed toes assist by slapping at the surface, propelling the grebe along to help build sufficient speed for lift-off. Once airborne, the grebe's flight is as swift and direct as an artillery shell since it has no tail feathers to help slow momentum or change direction. It must stay aloft until another body of water is reached, for a grebe cannot take off from land. In late autumn, grebes are sometimes found fatalistically slumped on iced-over lakes or sloughs where they have set down in error. Here they succumb to starvation and cold. The luckier ones are quickly dispatched by a coyote, fox or Great-Horned Owl. If approached, they flail at the hard surface with wings and feet, sprawling forward a foot or two on well-padded bellies, but they are the epitome of a duck out of water —completely at the mercy of all manner of peril. Despite this apparent handicap, grebes migrate long distances and when winter arrives in Canada, most are cruising about the warmer coastal waters of the United States and Central America. Much of our western populations spend the colder months along the coast of British Columbia.

With the arrival of spring, the grebes return to their breeding grounds, tingling with reproductive hormones that will generate another cycle of their primitive lineage. The rituals preceding actual mating are most spectacular with the Western Grebe. The climactic sequence is initiated by a smooth glide by both male and female, each bird arching and flexing the long, supple neck over the back and then on cue they rise completely out of the water, churning furiously with their feet to maintain this vertical posture. They dance side by side across the surface for eight to ten metres and then collapse back onto the water, coasting gracefully until their momentum is spent.

This past spring I observed a pair of Red-necked Grebes involved in a courtship display on a small slough west of Edmonton. Both birds submerged, then they popped to the surface facing one another about one-half metre apart. They likewise propelled themselves fully erect, necks extended upward and gaping bills angled towards the water. They circled one another several times in this strange manner, simultaneously expelling a series of awesome wails that carried well into the surrounding countryside. The smaller species of grebes also have well defined if less spectacular courtship ceremonies consisting of songs and various swimming manoeuvres — cryptic procedures to all but the enthusiastic participants. Once these performances have had their effect, the female is ready for copulation. She stretches out her neck, resting it lightly on the water and remains motionless. The male loafs in the vicinity, as if building his nerve for the decisive encounter. He meanders closer and finally peers over the female's platformed back for several seconds before hopping aboard. He treds gently and then slips back into the water whereupon both birds vocally express their satisfaction. Mating may take place in the water or on the nest.

The nest itself is built in one-half to three metres of water and maintained throughout courtship, egg laying and incubation. Nesting material may consist of a variety of plants depending on what is available — cattails, rushes, bladderwort, pondweed, or algal slime. The nest may be anchored to emergent vegetation but in any case, it is a sodden, floating structure that rocks in the wave action of the marsh or lake. Western, Red-necked and Eared Grebes nest in colonies containing from six to a hundred pairs or more. The commotion inherent with colonial nesters generally precludes attempts at secrecy and the nests are easy to spot from the shoreline. The Pied-billed and the Horned Grebe, however, build solitary nests and these are well concealed within the cover of cattails, bullrushes or other emergents. To my mind much has been unnecessarily written about the grebe's ability to select materials with the proper buoyancy required for a floating nest. Even submergent vegetation when removed and placed on the surface will be buoyed by the liquid's tension for quite some time. When piled together, as is customary with grebes, air becomes trapped within the bundle and greater buoyancy naturally results. Throughout the incubation period, the nest slowly sinks, but new bits of vegetation are regularly brought to the nest by one of the parents. The incubating bird receives these and tucks them into the structure. This practice, no doubt, helps to keep things afloat long enough for the young to hatch.

One morning while taking photographs on a slough near Calgary, I witnessed the inception of an Eared Grebe colony. It was past mid-June and nesting activities for this species were well overdue. My attention was drawn to approximately 50 grebes milling about in a corner of the marsh. On drawing nearer I noticed a lone clump of vegetation rolling on the surface. The female responsible for the structure was having a worrisome time establishing her property rights. Whenever she strayed from the vicinity to collect more material or to take part in courtship, another member of the group would enviously leap onto her nest. She would whirl angrily to drive off the trespasser with a menacing series of high-pitched peeps. But soon the others followed suit

with their own nests and by mid-afternoon 20 to 25 small rafts were concentrated in an area about 10 metres in diameter. The colony seethed with industry as the birds marked out territory, courted, mated, and thatched their nests. By nightfall, several pairs were already fretting over their first egg.

In the spring the adults begin to pluck out a large triangular portion of abdomenal down, and by the time the first egg is laid this area is almost completely naked, thus allowing easy transfer of the bird's body heat to the rapidly growing embryos. A new clutch contains an average of four bluish-white eggs. By the time the young grebes start chipping their way out into the world, the egg colour has become stained a dirty brown by the marsh waters. When disturbed from the nest, the parents will usually cover the eggs with loose nesting material to shield the treasure from the hungry eyes of gulls, crows, magpies and other scavengers.

It takes from three to three and a half weeks for the embryo to progress from yolk to a precocious, down-covered nymph that can swim or dive an hour or two after hatching. Often the babies will crawl from the nest onto the parent's back for their first foray into the marsh. They are piggy-backed in this fashion for a week or more while they gradually gain strength and learn to hunt on their own. The young are fed while riding or in the water. During a hailstorm or on exceptionally hot, sunny days the parent may ruffle up the dorsal feathers or lift a wing to protect the chicks. If danger threatens, the young may be carried below by a sudden dive. On such occasions they may be dislodged but the parent will enable them to scramble back aboard by remaining partially submerged so that the back is awash and more accessible. Many young grebes fall prey to snapping turtles, pike, large bullfrogs, herons and even muskrats on occasion. In turn the grebes feed on a variety of beetles, dragonfly nymphs, larvae, crayfish, tadpoles, minnows and young fish.

The small grebes are also fed feathers from the parent's own plumage, and this particular aspect of the diet is shared by grebes of all ages. An analysis of the stomach contents of 57 Horned Grebes by W. L. McAtee indicated that finely ground feathers constituted 66 per cent of the total. Grebes may do this simply to avoid casting a large quantity of feathers over the water's surface. The feathers resemble flying insects which are food for gulls, turtles and pike —certainly a dangerous crew to attract, especially during the nesting season when the eggs and young are so vulnerable to such predators. Some authorities suggest the feathers are swallowed to aid in the digestion of fish and crustaceans, the indigestable bones and shells later being regurgitated within a compact pellet of feathers.

The young grebes retain their downy plumage until almost two-thirds grown. At this time they develop feathers which are very similar to the adults' winter plumage. All grebes, except the Pied-billed, are coloured a dark charcoal with white underparts during the colder months and are very drab specimens until they once again develop their nuptial splendor. The Pied-billed Grebe changes the least, losing its black throat patch and the dark ring that encircles its bill during the breeding season. Fall migration occurs during September and October. The Western and Red-necked Grebes may assemble in flocks of 1,000 or more on larger inland lakes while in transit. By the time our sloughs and marshes have frozen over, most are cavorting about the estuaries and tidal pools of the Pacific, Atlantic and Caribbean.

Early in this century, the feathered boa became a fashion rage. Bird plumages were also used to decorate hats and trim garments with Parisian elegance. A bird-watcher could rack up a respectable score while quaffing a whisky and soda in one of Montreal's night clubs. While these plumes fluttered gaily in eastern cities, a much more grisly scene ensued on the prairies. Tens of thousands of grebes were shot on their breeding grounds, the breasts stripped off, dried and shipped to fashion-conscious markets where they sold for twenty cents each. Fortunately regulations were enacted by governments to end this practice.

No doubt today, many grebes are still shot by hunters mistaking them for waterfowl or simply wanting to test their marksmanship with a fast-moving target. Generally grebes have been able to adapt to the activities of humans. On resort lakes, the Red-necked Grebe finds suitable nesting sites even though water-skiers, fishermen or swimmers may be revelling near by. The smaller grebes habitually nest on shallow ponds or sloughs that do not offer any potential for human recreation. Unfortunately the arrival of cottagers on many northern lakes has driven the sensitive Western Grebe from much of its former habitat and colonies are now found only in isolated areas. This type of competition for living space will no doubt affect other species in the future. As human populations skyrocket, the world's demand for food will increase accordingly. Marshes and sloughs will be drained for agricultural purposes. A demand for greater productivity will cause an increase in the use of pesticides and herbicides and these toxins will quickly find their way into the food chains of our fresh-water systems. Grebes will be very susceptible to these accumulating poisons and whether or not they can survive will be tested by time. There are more than 500,000 other species that presently share our planet's limited resources. Humans and grebes represent a small but important fraction of this timeless mosaic. ◆

Mary Ann and Nels Peterson, from portraits believed to have been done in Manitoba shortly before their journey from Westbourne to Prince Albert in 1880.

Nels Peterson of Wingard — and his Diary

By Victor Carl Friesen

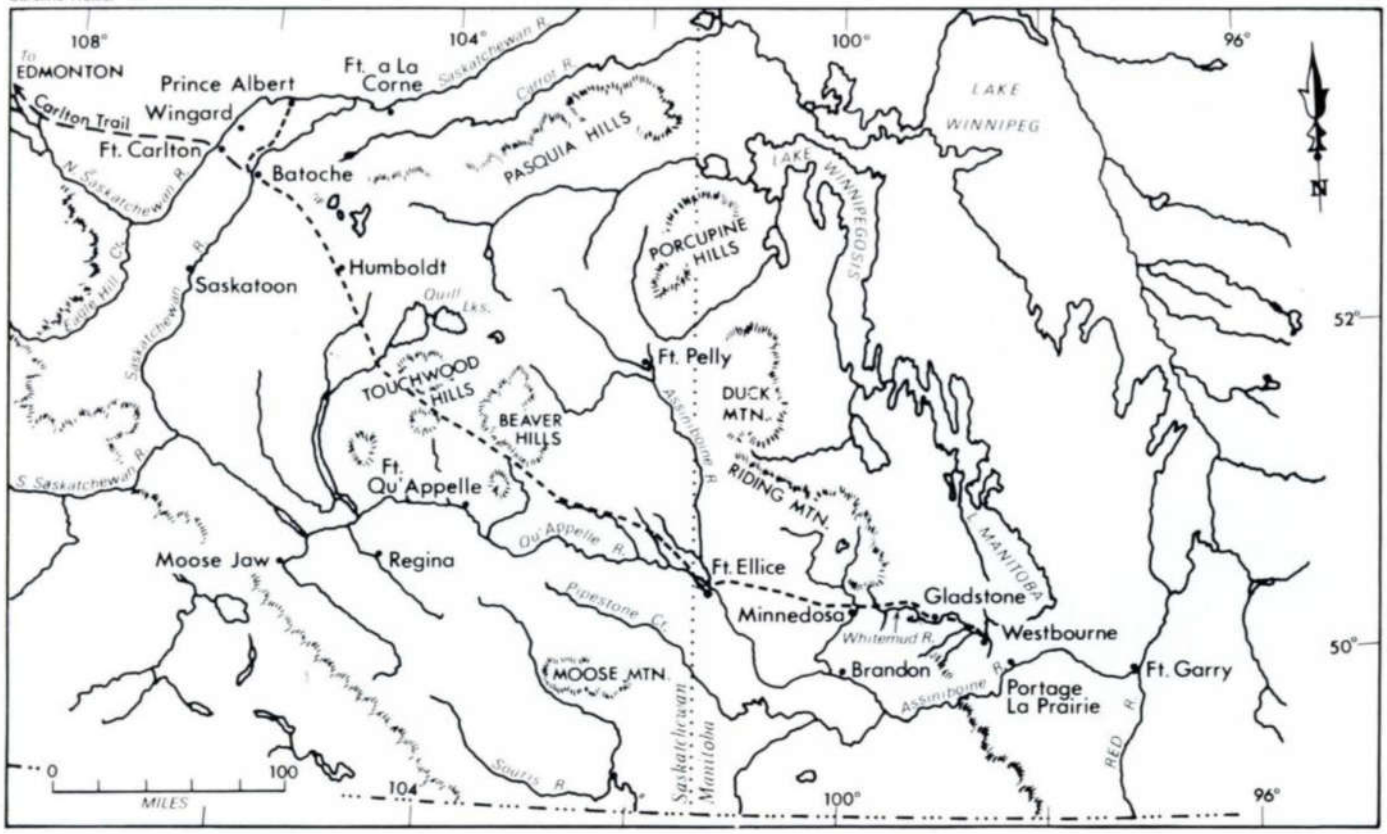
Dr Friesen, of Rosthern, Saskatchewan, is the author of numerous published articles about the historic region between the Saskatchewan Rivers. He teaches at Saskatoon Region Community College.

For information about Nels Peterson, the author wishes to express his indebtedness to the Peterson family of Wingard, Saskatchewan; with grateful acknowledgement to Carl Peterson, grandson of Nels, for permission to examine and photograph Nels Peterson's personal papers and pictures.

WINGARD is one of Saskatchewan's oldest communities. It is situated along the east bank of the North Saskatchewan River, about six miles north-east of Fort Carlton and twelve and a half miles north-west of Duck Lake. The area was settled before the Riel Rebellion of 1885, and some of the farmers there sought refuge in the fort on 27 March, the day after the first battle near Duck Lake. They left it in the early hours of next morning in the general evacuation to Prince Albert.

The trail led back through Wingard but the farmers from there proceeded to the Prince Albert settlement, distant by some sixty miles of winding, forest road. The procession moving along it was about two miles in length — fur traders and farmers, Prince Albert volunteers and North West Mounted Police. They feared an ambush on the way, but it was also unsafe to remain at Carlton. The fort was situated on a low river flat and indefensible. To add to the overall drama, the fort burned down, apparently through accident, upon their departure. A contemporary writer, Corporal

Caroline Trottier



The route travelled west by the Peterson family from Westbourne to Prince Albert, 28 July - 7 September 1880, followed a branch of the Carlton Trail as far as Batoche.

John G. Donkin of the North West Mounted Police, describes the scene: 'The whole fort, every building on every side of the square, was now a lurid blaze, which shed its vivid light on the broad snow-clad river, on dark trees and lofty slopes. . . . The groans of the wounded, the jingle of the horses' trappings, the crackling roar of the flames, and the deep voices of command all mingled in one bewildering sound.'

One of the Wingard residents driving a bobsleigh in the procession was a prominent pioneer, Andrew Nelson Peterson, or Nels Peterson as he was known.

On this forced march to Prince Albert, no misadventure occurred, but Peterson stayed in that settlement for three months, where his first grandchild was born. (His oldest daughter had married into the McKay clan, thus linking the Petersons with a family long known in the history of the Canadian fur trade.) Although Peterson had taken some valuables with him, the livestock had remained behind. Upon returning, he found it gone, presumably seized as booty by rebel forces. Even the chickens were missing — except for the feathers. A claim to the government later reimbursed him for only half the loss.

Adventure and hardship were nothing new to Nels Peterson. He had been born in 1832 and left his native Denmark when twelve or thirteen years old for a life at sea — not an uncommon thing then for boys of his age. In time he rose to be ship's carpenter but only for a short while. (The Peterson family still possesses a kind of sea-chest, filled with dozens of wooden planes, chisels and other woodworking tools used by Nels Peterson.) In the 1850s he was employed in the American West — as a gold miner in the Columbia River Valley, a packer for a government official there, and a servant of the American Fur Company on the Missouri River. During this interval he was twice attacked by Indians. The Crows held him prisoner for three months, and an assault by a Sioux war party resulted in the loss of two fingers from his left hand.

Things proved quieter in the Canadian West, where Peterson lived in the 1860s and 1870s. Although he had moved to the Manitoba region, he escaped the excitement of the Red River Uprising of 1869-70; his homes were first at High Bluff, then Westbourne, two communities near Portage la Prairie. He was married by then, with four children, but his wandering was not over. The sight of caravans of ox carts passing his home probably prompted him to strike out yet farther west. So it was that he left Westbourne by wagon train on 28 July 1880, and arrived at Prince Albert on 7 September.

The account of his six-week-long journey still survives in the Peterson family. The trip was made along part of the Carlton Trail linking Fort Garry to

Edmonton, and his description of the journey corroborates what others have said of the hardships en route. He entitled the record "Manneradum of my Trip from Westbourn to the Bige Saskatchewan'. Accompanying Nels were his wife, Mary Ann, and their children: Augusta, aged sixteen; Wray, twelve; Ida, eight; and Charles, four. Also travelling in the wagon train were Mrs Peterson's mother (Mrs Erasmus, or 'Grany') and the families of Samuel Smith, Harry Fletcher, Frank Sinclair and James Hamilton.

During the first stage of their journey there were frequent heavy rains and thunderstorms which made travel slow and difficult. The carts became stuck in mudholes, and there were sloughs and numerous streams to cross. There were also endless swarms of flies ('bouldogs') and mosquitoes.

From the start of the trip, Nels Peterson recorded in his diary, they encountered wet weather: 'I left my house on Wenestay July 28-1880 and it came on a wery hevy rain and thunder storm. I therefor had to stop at the H. B. House until Friday 30th.'

By Saturday, 31 July, they had travelled about 18 miles to Gladstone, where there was another heavy rain and thunderstorm. 'August 1st - Started from Gladstone and traveled about 4 miles to get al our things dryed as ve had ben flooded during the night befor. . . .' Travel was slow for the next three days. There was 'water and mud all the way'. On Wednesday, 4 August, Nels recorded 'the wether being wery hot bouldogs wery bad the roods being horrable. Cattle nerly pleying out and had to camp in the woods within 2 miles of Minedosa.' They remained near Minnedosa for two days to give the cattle a rest. On the second day Nels noted in his diary 'Augusta bing very ill. ther ve lost the old cat. . . .'

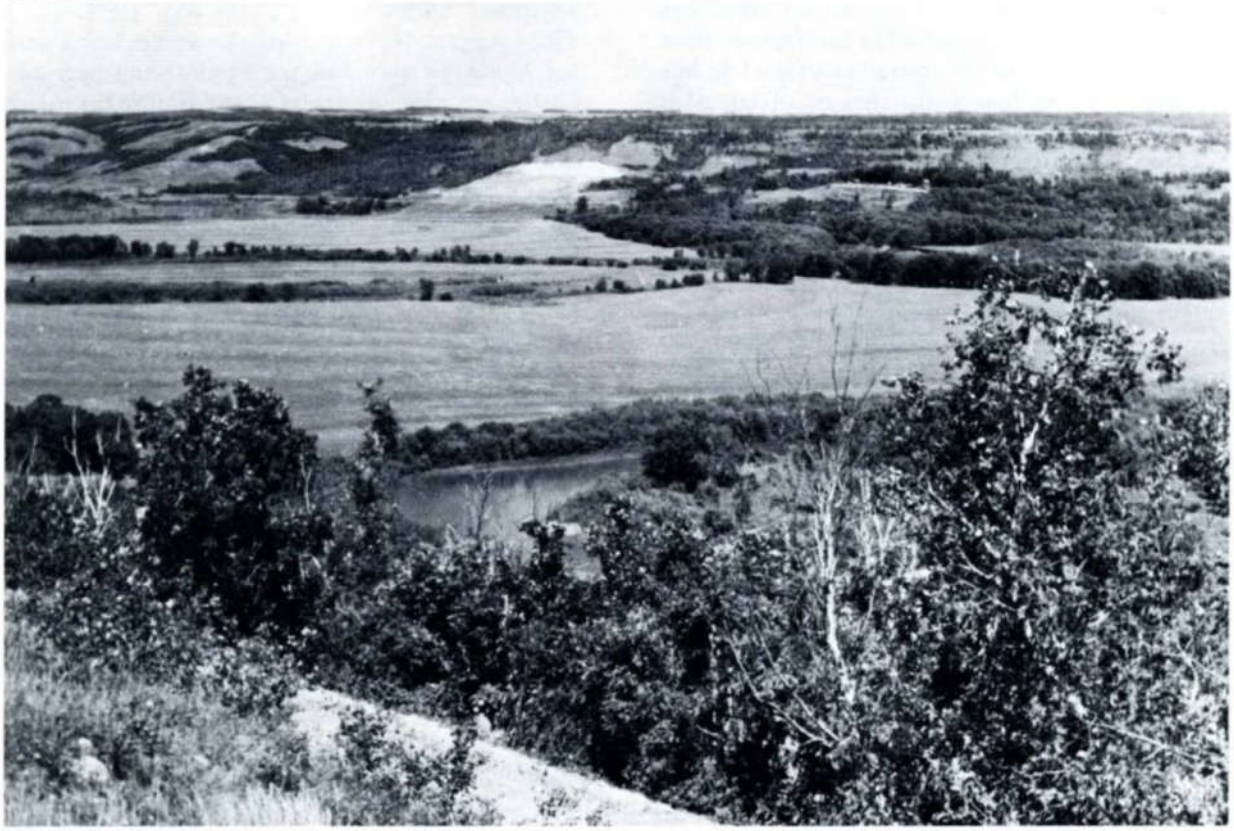
There were also pleasant aspects to the journey. The staple foods were supplemented by wild game and berries. In all eighty-nine ducks and seven prairie chickens were added to the menu in the Peterson group during the six weeks on the trail. On 7 August Nels recorded that 'Fletcher kild 16 ducks' and the following day (Sunday) they travelled two miles to get firewood and 'had a good feas of ducks'.

During the next six days they followed the trail through Shoal Lake, across Birdtail Creek and on to Fort Ellice. This H B C post was located on a plateau up on the west bank of the Assiniboine Valley about three miles south of the junction of the Assiniboine and Qu'Appelle Rivers. Traversing the 250-foot-high banks of the Assiniboine and Qu'Appelle River valleys presented great difficulty for loaded carts. On Thursday, 12 August, Nels recorded that after crossing the Assiniboine River, they 'stoped to take diner at the Werhouse' (probably the H B C warehouse on the west

Red River carts on the trail between Fort Ellice and the Qu'Appelle Post, 1879. The Peterson group travelled by Red River cart and horse and wagon.

Geological Survey of Canada

James McCook



View of the east side of the Assiniboine Valley from the site of Fort Ellice. Traversing the 250-foot-high banks of the Assiniboine and Qu'Appelle River valleys presented great difficulty for loaded carts.

C. Preston

A section of the Carlton Trail is still visible a few miles west of the site of Fort Ellice.

side of the Assiniboine River below Fort Ellice). After dinner they proceeded north-west and crossed the Qu'Appelle River. They had to camp here all day on 13 August 'as Hamiltons cart was compltly brock down'. During the delay Harry Fletcher obtained a hundred pounds of flour, 'we al so bought a half bushel of Botados' and James Hamilton 'traided his mair for an ox'.

On Saturday, 14 August, they began the steep climb up from the Qu'Appelle Valley. 'Started at 10 a clock wether being wery hot and hard work for the cattel to get up the hill.' Here one of Peterson's oxen went lame and Mrs Peterson, in their struggle to gain the top of the rise, lost her precious workbag of sewing paraphernalia. 'Ve took diner a bout 2 miels from the top of the hill, after diner ve travled a bout 10 miles and cam to what the call the Muskag and campd ther. Mary Ann greving very much the loss of her work bag. The Jerry ox laim.'

The following evening they 'camped at Cutarm Crick. . . . The Jerry ox stil wery laim. The wether wery clouty and showers of rain which continu during the hole night.'

Travel followed a similar fashion for the next week until they reached the fort in the Touchwood Hills. Other travellers on the trail, coming and going, provided an opportunity to exchange the latest news.

V. C. Friesen

Carl Peterson, grandson of Nels, in front of the original home of the Peterson family in Wingard. The building also housed the post office at one time.

'August 23th, Munday - We had to stop in Camp to fix the carts and make 2 new axels. wi olso had to send to the Fort for Powder and Shot and nails. Robert Anderson stopd and had dinner with os.'

Next day Harry Fletcher and Frank Sinclair went on ahead 'thinking we wer travling to slo.' The remainder of the group had dinner at the Government Farm where they traded horses with an Indian and 'got a 3 year old meir for Old Charlie the Stud by giving 50 lbs flour ½ lb Tea and 2 lb Bacon to buot.' Six miles further on they camped for the night, and Nels noted 'ther was quite a Camp of Indins closte to our Camp all wery hard up for Provesion. ve traded a few small potatoes from them.'

On Wednesday, 25 August, they had to stop in camp the whole day as 'Old Grany bing sick, it was also raining the hole day.'

On Thursday, 26 August, they reached the 'big Plains' (Quill Plains). Wood was scarce here, and when on the following day the hind axle of the light wagon broke off close to the shoulder they were fortunate to have 'a good ash Tentpol which answered the purps.'

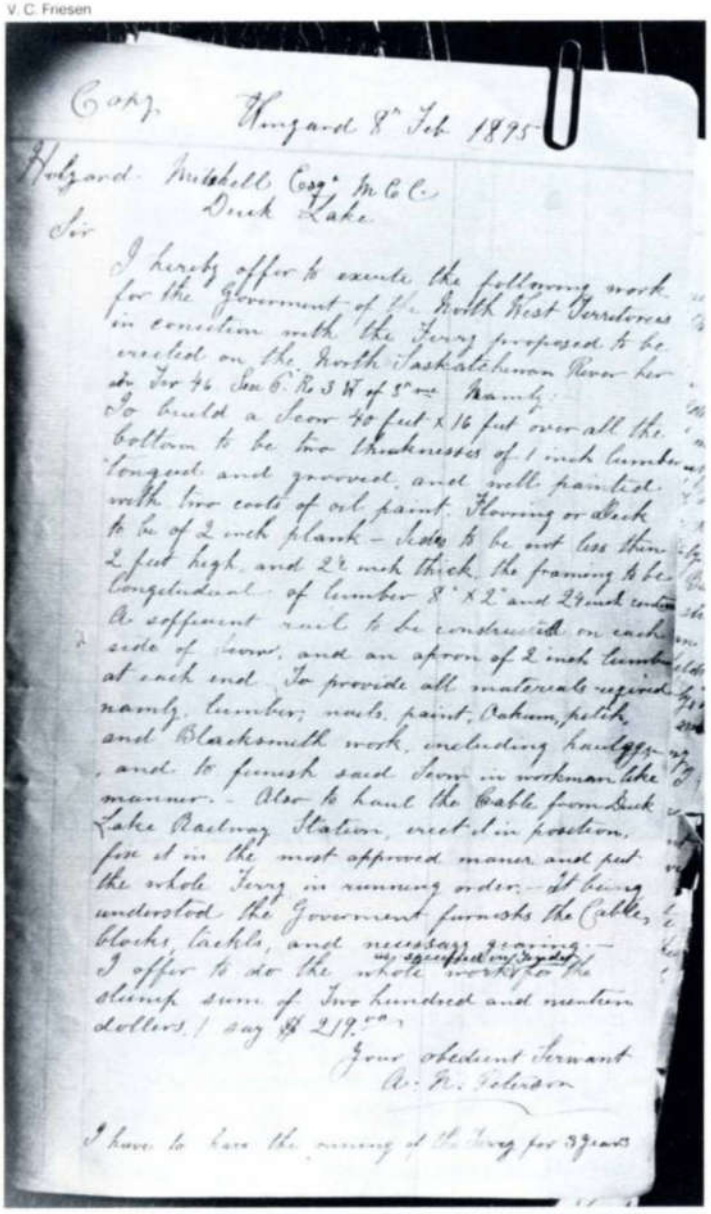
'Grany' continued to be ill for the next four days, a time of heavy thundershowers. By then they had passed Humboldt.

By Friday, 3 September, the weather had turned fine. Grany was feeling much better, but Nels recorded that 'little Charles was very sick last night.' They parted from their 'French Half breds Frinds' who had been travelling with them since the previous day. Although Nels refers to it only as the 'crossing on the Southbranch', it is believed that at this point the Peterson group forked off on the branch of the trail which led to the scow crossing on the South Saskatchewan River at Batoche.

On Saturday, 4 September, they were slowed down by rain and muddy roads. The insects had died down because of frosts, but that in itself was another discomfort. 'The wether was cold Cloudy and windy and ther was whit fros last night.' On Sunday, 5 September, they passed some Indian farms and observed the Indians reaping barley. About 5 o'clock in the afternoon they came to the river crossing where they camped 'close by an Indien House, and ther Joseph Omen and James Monkman cam to our Camp and chat with os. Old Grany fine and little Charles is stil better. hevy Frost last night.'

On Monday, 6 September, they crossed the South Saskatchewan River. 'Vi ar waiting with pations to get a cros the River it being 10 a clock now and the hav mad no atempt to com with the Scow was yet.' An hour later the scow appeared, but it took until 6:00 p.m. to complete the difficult crossing. From here the

V. C. Friesen



Copy. Wingard 8th Feb 1895

Holzgard Mitchell Esqr M.C.C.
Duck Lake

Sir

I hereby offer to execute the following work for the Government of the North West Territories in connection with the Ferry proposed to be erected on the North Saskatchewan River here at or near the South East corner of Sec 6 Tp 46 Rge 3 W of 3rd mer. Namely:
To build a Scow 40 feet x 16 feet over all the bottom to be two thicknesses of 1 inch lumber tongued and grooved, and well painted with two coats of oil paint. Flooring or deck to be of 2 inch plank - Sides to be not less than 2 feet high, and 2½ inch thick, the framing to be longitudinal of lumber 8" x 2" and 2½ inch centers. A coffpenn rail to be constructed on each side of Scow, and an apron of 2 inch lumber at each end. To provide all materials required namely, lumber, nails, paint, Oakum, pitch, and Blacksmith work, including handles, and to furnish said Scow in workmanlike manner. Also to haul the Cable from Duck Lake Railway Station, erect it in position, fix it in the most approved manner and put the whole Ferry in running order; it being understood the Government furnishes the Cable, blocks, tackle, and necessary gearing.
I offer to do the whole work for the sum of Two hundred and nineteen dollars / say $ 219.00

Your obedient Servant
A. R. Johnson

I have to have the running of the Ferry for 3 years

The government contract awarded to Nels Peterson in 1895 to build and operate a ferry on the North Saskatchewan River.

main route of the Carlton Trail continued west to Fort Carlton and then on to Edmonton. The Peterson group left the main trail at this point to branch off north to Prince Albert. A relative, Henry Erasmus, came out to meet them and accompany them the last miles. On Tuesday, 7 September, Nels Peterson and his family safely completed their journey to Prince Albert. About two years later Peterson moved to the Fort Carlton area and took up a farmstead: S.E. ¼, Sec. 6, Tp. 46, Rge. 3, W. 3rd.

Peterson called the vicinity of his final home, Weingarten, after a site in Denmark, and later agreed to anglicize the name to Wingard. He settled down permanently and devoted his full efforts to developing the growing community. Church services were held at first at his home by an Anglican minister who came out from Prince Albert. In 1892-93 a log church was erected in true pioneer fashion: each member of the congregation contributed two logs for it. It stood on a hilltop and, with its steeple and white walls glistening in the sunlight, was a landmark for miles around. Peterson also had a hand in 1895 in the building of a school which, together with the area it drew upon, was registered as the Stoney Lake School District, No 208. The building was another log structure, sixteen by twenty-four feet in dimensions.

Nels Peterson was prominent in two other enterprises. The Wingard Post Office was established in 1888 in Peterson's house, and Nels was the first postmaster, a position he held for sixteen years. His second government responsibility was just as vital. The year before, in 1887, he had built a scow to transport people and goods across the North Saskatchewan River. Then in 1895 he was given a three-year contract by the government of the Territories, first to build a regular ferry and then to operate it. He whipsawed the planks from logs obtained from the nearby pine forest. It was the only ferry operating on the river between Battleford and Prince Albert.

All these things, of course, were done by an unschooled person, as so many of our pioneers were. And yet the concrete evidence of these accomplishments is manifest in Peterson's own written account, kept as the events occurred. The enterprises themselves have not escaped the ravages of time. The log school served the Wingard children until 1949 when it was replaced by a more modern structure. The church was struck by lightning in 1955 and burned down; a less imposing edifice, covered with brick siding, now stands on the hilltop. The post office no longer exists. It survived an earlier struggle to keep its name (it was often confused with that of another Saskatchewan community —Wynyard), but it finally went the way of all such rural mail services. A large iron ferry now operates where Peterson's wooden one once did.

The written accounts by Nels Peterson, on the other hand, are extant — and all in the possession of the Peterson family. Even a second copy of the original contract to operate the ferry survives. Peterson kept the post office ledger, his own ledger of happenings in his day-to-day life and a commonplace book of ideas he found worth recording (mainly religious) from his limited reading. In addition he corresponded with friends elsewhere. His difficulty in keeping up any kind of written communication is seen in this extract from one of his letters, both in its content and style: 'You well no doupt find many grammatical mustucks and mispelt word in this account which migh give an Englis educated man the spasms, but I hope it will not afect You in that way, but hope exues all mustack, as I have never recived and Englis education and have spet the best part of My life on the fronter.' ◆

OLD MAN CARVER

A Short Story

By Alootook Ipellie

Tom Prescott

Although Mr Ipellie calls his carver Nipikti, he bases this story on his memories of his famous grandfather, the carver Ennutsiak of Frobisher Bay. Above is one of Ennutsiak's carvings, done in 1966-67 when he was 80 years of age. The carving portrays scenes in everyday life in a village: a baby is born, villagers dance, women make a rope from sealskin, men play a game of strength with hands and arms. The story is told in syllabics on the back of a caribou. This carving was commissioned by the Manitoba Branch of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild.

Author and graphic artist Alootook Ipellie, 29, went to school in Frobisher Bay and Yellowknife, then attended art classes for three years at Ottawa's Fisher Park High School and High School of Commerce. He is now engaged in writing and illustrating a number of books.

NIPIKTI WAS NOW AN old man and took three times as long as any young Inuk to get from one point to another. Almost every week, he would get up from his small carving studio at home and start walking out to the Co-op where he sold at least a half-dozen carvings he had finished during the week. He hung the bag of carvings over his shoulder and started out the door, his walking stick leading the way for him.

'This is the day I will get the upper hand of the deal with the Co-op manager. I have no doubt that he will fall in love with the carving I finished today' he said as he closed the door behind himself.

On the way to the Co-op, Nipikti would stop several times to rest his tired old legs by sitting on the same rocks he had sat on for the last 20 years or so.

'Ahhh! Hi, Ojagajaak, it feels good to rest on you' he would say to the first rock as if the rock was an old friend of his. 'These legs of mine are a little

weaker than last week. So I will have to sit on you for an extra five minutes if you do not mind.'

There he sat to rest on Ojagajaak and gazed across the land where he had lived as a young man. That is the place where he had hunted the good animals of the land. That is where he had taken care of his wife and family when they were growing up. 'Those were good times of the past' he thought. 'Times when carvings like these were toys and tokens to us Inuit.'

He got up slowly and continued on to the Co-op where he would get the money to support his family. The Co-op was still quite far away.

'If I had my way, I would prefer to carve the stones and ivory to make toys for my children and hunt the animals like I used to. I wasn't such a bad hunter in those days' Nipikti said to himself.

'I never thought I would be living off the very carvings I used to make only to keep my children happy.'

Nipikti finally came to the rock where he sat to rest the second time along the way to the Co-op and said, 'How are you today Ojagakaluk? I have come again to rest on you. I am an old man now, you know.'

He sat on Ojagakaluk and took enough rest there to make it to the next rock. 'I shall see you again on my way back. Just make sure the bulldozer doesn't push you under before then' Nipikti shouted back to the second rock as he slowly started walking on.

When he came to the third rock, he sat down and said, 'You know, Ojagakutaaq, you are probably the most comfortable rock I have ever sat on in my life. I must say I will certainly miss you the day they remove you from this spot to make way for the new road. You have been a good rock to me and I must thank you in case they start building the road while I am at the Co-op.'

He then got up to walk the last leg of the trip to the local Co-op and said to himself that it was time to think about how much he would persuade the Co-op manager to pay him for his carvings. Especially for the good one he finished earlier that day.

'I should be able to sell the good carving for $150 easily' he said. 'I'm sure there isn't any other carving this week that was done any better than this one.'

When he got to the Co-op, Nipikti took the six carvings out of the bag and laid them on the desk for the manager to look at.

The manager picked up the carvings one by one and looked them over carefully. When he came to the carving Nipikti had done that day, he immediately offered Nipikti $120 for it.

Nipikti stood leaning on his walking stick and counted the things he had planned to do with the $150. Nipikti knew by experience that the carving was worth that much or even more. 'One hundred and fifty dollars' he said.

The manager looked up at Nipikti's face, then picked up the carving in question and mused over the fine detail of the work Nipikti had done. 'Okay' he finally said. 'I'll give you $130 for it.'

Nipikti looked at the manager's face and thought about the last offer for $130. 'If you think you are going to play games with me, you might as well be prepared to do it for the rest of the day' he said in Inuktitut.

The manager clearly understood that Nipikti was

Ennutsiak, right, in his later years, with his son Arnitok Ipeelee.

not about to change his original asking price of $150. He knew that the price was right for the carving. But he decided to try once more to buy the carving for less. 'One hundred and forty' he said.

Nipikti just stood there and cleared his throat, then said for the last time, 'One hundred and fifty dollars.' And with that he tapped the top of the desk with his right hand. It was a sign that he meant business. At that moment, the manager decided to give up trying to persuade the old carver to sell at a lower price and agreed to pay the $150 Nipikti was asking.

Nipikti had won the battle this time around. He took the money for the carvings he brought in and went out the door to begin his journey back home with his walking stick in hand and money in his pocket. He had enough to support his family for several weeks. He looked across the land and saw that the three rocks where he sat to rest each week were still there. No one had started to build the road yet. And he just smiled and said to himself that it was good.

'I had better make sure that they do not bulldoze my rocks away. The way I see it, I am sure to win my case over that too.' He slowly moved on towards home where he would start on another carving. ◆

A group of Eskimos thank God for their meal — a seal. By the artist Ennutsiak. Donated to the Eskimo Museum, Churchill, Manitoba by Gerry Twomey, 1969.

George Swinton

Grand Rapids on the Athabasca River. From a woodcut by Ernest Lamarque, 1933.

Rescue from Upper Wells

By Carl J. Buchanan

BEFORE THE DAYS of modern radio communication, the telegraph lines and the men who operated and maintained them played a vital role in northern development and communications.

The job of the telegraph operator was a lonely one, for the stations were as much as 70 miles apart, and some of them were completely isolated for many weeks at a time. During the periods of break-up in the spring and freeze-up in the fall, the tiny telegraph key was for some operators their only link with civilization.

The telegraph line to northern Alberta ran from Edmonton to Athabasca Landing, where it divided. One branch led to Peace River some 300 miles to the north-west, while the second line ran down the Athabasca River to Fort McMurray, 250 miles by river but somewhat shorter by the telegraph line which took the shortest route between the many curves of the river.

This story has to do with the Athabasca River line to Fort McMurray and with Upper Wells, site of one of the earliest natural gas wells in Alberta. Gas was struck here at 680 feet, a casing was put in, and a

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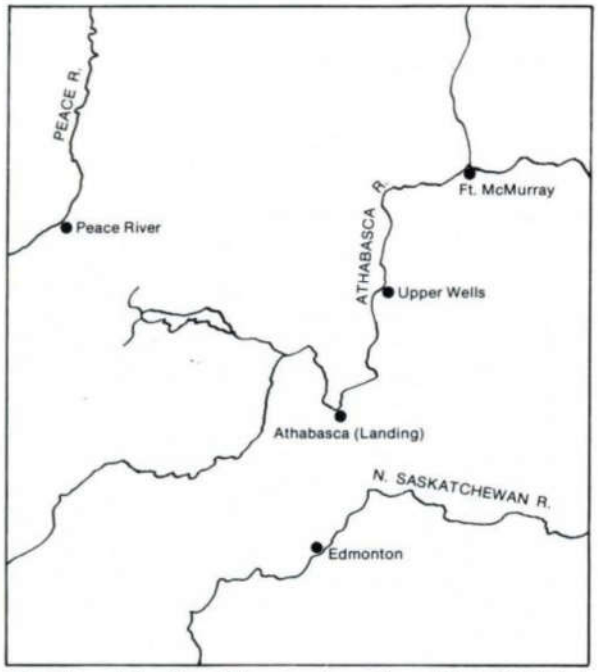
Carl J. Buchanan, now retired from farming and living in Penticton, B.C., has written several articles for 'The Beaver' on northern Alberta during the 1930s.

The author wishes to express his appreciation to Charles Senz of Athabasca, Alberta, for providing details of the story, and photographs.



The telegraph line from Edmonton to northern Alberta divided at Athabasca Landing: one branch led north-west to Peace River, the other ran down the Athabasca River to Fort McMurray.

well head installed. Later when the telegraph line was built, the gas was piped into the telegraph house for heating and cooking.

In October 1932 the operator of the telegraph station at Upper Wells was Frank Senz. At dusk on the evening of 28 October he and his brother George were putting finishing touches to a new telegraph building. They had just completed laying a pipe from the gas well to the new building and connecting it to their cookstove. Their younger brother Charles, who was fifteen, had come down river to help George run his trapline during the winter months. He was preparing to wash up the dishes as a prelude to cooking supper. He set a pan of water on the stove and lit the burner. Then on the spur of the moment he decided to have a look at a weasel trap he had set a few hundred yards downstream.

A few minutes later George thought he smelled leaking gas. He hurriedly shut off the burner, took up a flashlight and went down into the cellar through the heavy door in the floor. He found the source of the leak and was just coming up through the open trap door when his brother Frank entered the building.

As the rush of fresh air from outside merged with the warm gas-laden air within, there was a shattering explosion. The roof was blasted several feet into the air, so high in fact, that the heavy cellar door, wrenched from its moorings, was blown completely over the end of the building before the roof came down. It landed some distance away in the bush. Frank who had been standing in the open doorway was hurled across the yard, his clothing in shreds and the skin of his face burned away. George, crouching in the entrance to the gas-laden cellar, received a searing blast full in the face. It blew him from the ladder, across the cellar and against the far wall. Luckily there was just one mighty blast and the remains of the building did not burn.

Charles was examining his weasel trap downstream when he heard the explosion and the sound of splintering timbers. He went on the run for the station. When he arrived he found his two brothers wandering dazedly about, the burned skin hanging in shreds from their faces, their eyes swollen shut, and in terrible pain. His heart sank, for there was not one thing available at the station to treat their burns — no first-aid kit, not even a bottle of whisky to ease their suffering.

The new building was a shambles of shattered wood, but fortunately the old telegraph building was still serviceable and the telegraph equipment had not as yet been moved to the new place. Shepherding Frank and George into the building, Charles built up a fire to keep them warm and then tapped out his call for help to Athabasca, 120 miles upstream. From there it was relayed on to Edmonton.

The authorities at Edmonton were at a loss as to

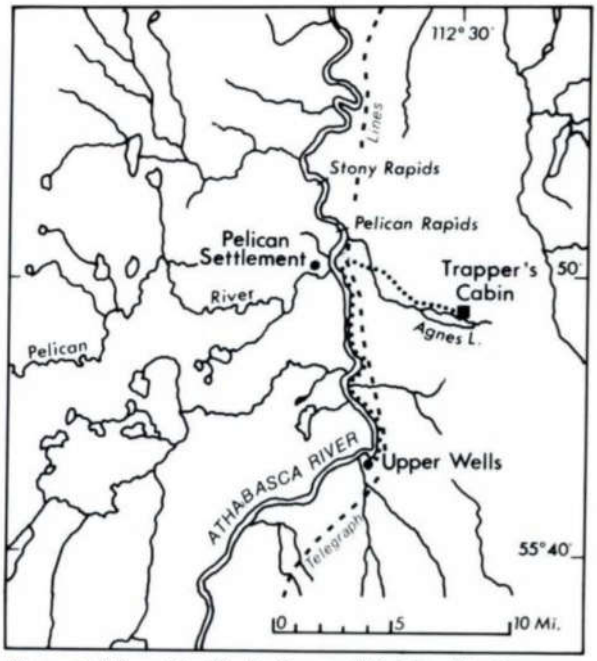
Frank Senz with his wife and daughter, photographed at Upper Wells in 1940.

Courtesy of Charles Senz

what to do. The situation looked hopeless, for a disaster such as this could not have happened at a worse time of year. The Athabasca River ran thick with ice, so rescue by boat was out of the question. In summer a plane could have landed on the river on pontoons, or in winter on skis, but between seasons any type of landing was impossible. Nor were there any open areas on land where a plane could be brought down. There was no road in, only the meandering telegraph line where dog-teams were used in winter. Since there was no snow as yet it could not be used as a rescue route.

In Edmonton Grant McConachie, a young bush pilot who was then the head of Independent Airways of Edmonton, was called in for his opinion. Was there a lake in the area where a plane might land? Yes, Charles told them, there was one, Agnes Lake, some eleven miles to the north-east. The ice was not thick enough to support a plane, but there was a cabin on the lakeshore and close by, a sandy beach that might be large enough to serve as a landing strip. Get the men to Agnes Lake, said McConachie, and he would attempt to fly in the next day.

Now Charles was faced with the seemingly impossible task of transporting the two injured men the eleven miles to Agnes Lake in the dead of night.



The route followed by Charles Senz and his injured brothers from Upper Wells to the rescue point on Agnes Lake.

Charles Senz, c. 1945.

Courtesy of Charles Senz

The first six miles of the route lay down the Athabasca River, through a jungle of deadfalls, gullies, creeks and heavy bush — an obstacle course for the able-bodied let alone for two painfully burned men who could not see where they were going.

Tied up on the shore was a small scow which the Senz brothers had used to bring supplies down the Athabasca during the summer. It was made of heavy planking and likely to withstand punishment from the jagged ice. Handling the cumbersome craft alone would be a herculean task for the fifteen-year-old boy, but it was their only hope.

After dressing his brothers warmly and filling a small pack-sack with food, he guided them onto the old scow, climbed aboard with a stout pole, and set out down the river in the darkness.

The next two-and-a-half hours were a nightmare of gruelling labour as Charles struggled to keep the heavy scow from running aground on the sandbars or being smashed by rocks or ice floes. At long last he poled the craft ashore at a point where a trappers' footpath led overland to the cabin at Agnes Lake.

Up the steep hills out of the river valley, they inched their way along the frozen swamps and timber of the uplands: two blind and pain-racked men led by a young boy carrying a coal-oil lantern to light the way. They arrived at last at the little cabin on the lake. Charles prepared food and coffee; after this they waited hopefully for daybreak, when they expected the plane would come to their rescue.

Dawn came at last, and Charles was almost

Public Archives Canada C-61901

Grant McConachie beside a Fokker bush plane similar to the one he flew in to Agnes Lake to rescue the Senz brothers in October 1932.

constantly outside, his ears straining for the sound of an engine. Noon came and went with no sign of the rescue plane. All too soon the light of day dwindled into the dusk of evening, and they knew there would be no rescue that day. There was only one thing to do, Charles decided, and that was to leave his brothers and embark on the long hike back to the telegraph station to find out the reason for the delay.

As darkness fell he set out, carrying the barn lantern. This time he would have to walk the entire distance, and he shuddered in his nearly exhausted state as he contemplated that six-mile obstacle course along the river banks in the blackness of the night. He made good time on the first five miles, and then started upstream. At times he was able to walk by the river's edge on the stones, but they were covered with slimy silt and rimed with frost, making it difficult for him to keep his footing. Then the banks dropped sheer to the water, and he had to fight his way through a tangle of deadfalls, sink-holes and icy streams, up and down steep gullies and through an almost impenetrable growth of willow, alder and cranberry bushes which had been eaten off by moose so that they formed a thick hedge. But he kept going because he had to, and after five hours of torturous effort he saw the outline of the telegraph building ahead.

Within moments of his arrival he was seated at the telegraph, tapping out an anxious inquiry about the expected plane. The authorities in Edmonton were just as anxiously awaiting his call. The reason for the delay, he was told, was that McConachie would not be allowed to undertake the mission without further information regarding the projected landing place. The site of the proposed landing would need to be clearly marked with a row of spruce branches laid out along the ice of the lakeshore. The narrow strip of beach had to be cleared of stones, pieces of wood or any other obstructions, and any brush which might catch the wing of a plane had to be cleared away. Lastly, he was to prepare a small bonfire for lighting when the plane appeared on the scene, so the pilot could determine the direction and force of the wind.

Grant McConachie talked to Charles personally to explain what was required. He said that if Charles could be ready at daylight the following morning he and engineer Chris 'Limey' Green would be on the scene. His old blue Fokker airplane was fuelled and ready to go.

'Please come' Charles answered, 'everything will be ready.' With a thankful heart he set about preparing supper and a pot of steaming coffee to refuel himself for his second night of superhuman effort. He

shuddered at the thought of the long trek to Agnes Lake, for his legs and feet were pain-filled stumps from the rigours of the last two trips. Then, in his desperation came inspiration. Lying on the beach was a small rowboat, frail and flimsy and certainly no match for the slabs of ice floating down the river. But should it stay afloat it would save him an enormous amount of hard going, and perhaps two hours of precious time. Luck was with him, for he drifted down the river without mishap, and landed at last on the shore close by the trail to the lake. He reached the cabin in the early hours of the morning.

There was much to do in the few short hours before the sun rose. The first priority was to cut the spruce boughs to mark the landing site along the edge of the lake. He took up the axe and set about the task. Unfortunately the nearest spruce tree was a quarter of a mile down the lakeshore. He felled the tree and spent the next couple of hours back-packing branches and lining them up near the edge of the ice.

The next step was to go over the narrow strip of beach carefully, removing everything that might cause trouble when the plane came in. He felled everything along the shore that might catch a wing, and searched the reeds for hidden snags. Just before dawn he gathered a heap of dry grass and birch-bark, ready to light when the plane appeared.

McConachie was true to his word. The sun was just rising over the horizon when Charles heard the sound he had been praying for — the roar of a powerful engine. Fortunately it was a clear day, and as McConachie approached Agnes Lake he had a good view of the shore. Looking over the beach with an experienced eye, he saw that it was less than 1,000 yards in length, with the trapper's cabin near one end. He also observed that the clear stretch of beach was so narrow that it would be necessary to land with one wheel on the strip of sand and the other on the shore ice in order to clear the trees. This assessment of the situation gave little cause for optimism, for the disadvantage of the Fokker was that it had no brakes. Instead it had a hook attached to the tail-skid which was supposed to dig into the ground and halt the plane. On the frozen surface of the lakeshore this hook would not be of any use. The lack of brakes also meant that the plane could not be steered once it landed and the rudder was no longer effective. This left little margin for error when the narrow beach was edged on one side by the lake and on the other side by trees and frozen marsh. It would be close he knew, perilously close.

As McConachie flew low over the beach for the landing approach Charles lit the pile of fuel, and a dense cloud of smoke billowed upward. Unfortunately it flattened out and then drifted directly down the strip of beach. McConachie was so blinded by the smoke that after two attempts he gave up the idea of landing into the wind, as was the normal procedure so that the head-wind would provide the lowest possible ground speed. So the odds were further stacked against him; landing downwind meant that the wind would push the plane along instead of slowing it down. McConachie's skills as a pilot and his experience with this particular type of plane were about the only things in their favour.

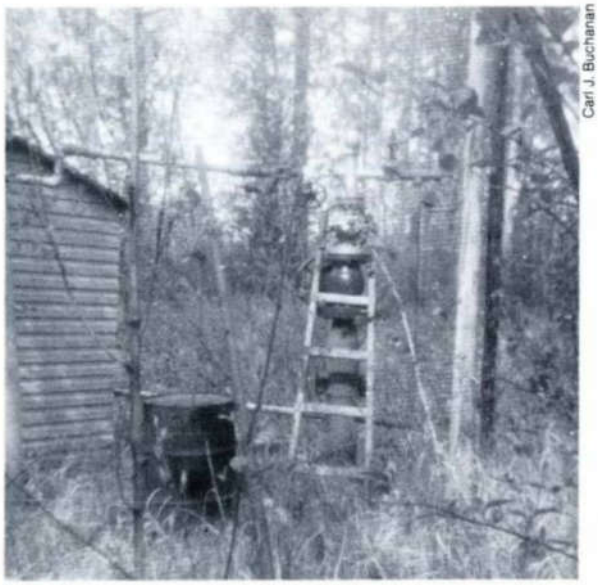
As the plane came in for the landing it bounced madly on the frozen sand, ripping out reeds and hummocks of grass. Then it passed over a sharp willow snag, overlooked by Charles in the thick reeds the night before, and the fabric on the plane's underside was sliced open from engine-cowling to tail. It stopped at last, so close to the cabin that the men could have almost stepped from the cabin doorway into the airplane. McConachie's original plan had been to fly in a doctor to treat the Senz brothers, but the authorities felt that the risks were too great. So instead the Fokker had been loaded with a box of medical supplies and a doctor's instructions for temporary treatment of the men's burns. McConachie had anticipated that the plane (but hopefully not the crew) would be damaged on landing. His intention had been to wait for the ice to freeze so a plane on skis could land to pick them up. When he saw the extent of the men's injuries, however, it was apparent to McConachie that the return flight would have to be made without delay.

While McConachie gave Frank and George first aid, Chris Green examined the damage to the plane. He rummaged around in his tool box, came up with a hank of heavy fishing line and a huge needle and set about stitching the overcoat of the plane back together.

McConachie paced off the length of the makeshift runway, calculated his chances of a successful take-off and found them extremely remote. The absence of brakes meant that there was nothing to hold the aircraft while the engine was being revved up to full power. With the 'runway' being so short they would need every possible inch of ground.

As soon as Chris Green had completed his sutures, they hauled the plane back as far as possible and up a slight slope. McConachie then tied a length of stout rope securely to the tail, ran it over a stump, and tied the other end to a tree some distance behind the airplane. The injured men were loaded aboard, and McConachie gave Charles his final instructions.

'I'll get in' he said, 'and pour on the coal. When I wave you cut the rope with the axe where it crosses the stump.' Charles took up his position behind the tail, axe in hand. McConachie climbed aboard and started building up the power, until the old Fokker was bouncing madly up and down, straining at the rope. Charles was almost blown off his feet in a rain of sand, pebbles, reeds and assorted debris. The



Carl J. Buchanan

The old natural gas well at Upper Wells, with a new well head installed by Dick Neuman, who moved into the telegraph house in 1954 when the government discontinued use of the line.

Carl J. Buchanan

The telegraph house at Upper Wells, which was rebuilt after the explosion of 1932. Standing in the doorway is Dick Neuman with his son Jerry. Neuman operated a trading post and trapline in the area for 51 years. Shortly before his death in 1978 he was presented with a plaque by local officials in appreciation of the hospitality he extended over the years to travellers on the Athabasca River.

screaming propeller tossed up everything that wasn't frozen down. Finally through the flying barrage he dimly saw a waving arm and swung the axe. The old plane hurtled down the beach like a scalded cat, completely hidden by an avalanche of sand and small stones, bits of muskrat house and bullrushes.

Seconds later, when the last bit of ground disappeared beneath his speeding wheels, McConachie eased off, skimming out over the thin ice. Heavily loaded and just barely airborne, the plane struggled into the sky foot by foot, and at last rose high enough to clear the timber that lined the far shore.

Charles watched the plane disappear from sight with a feeling of intense relief. Soon now, he knew —in fact before he could walk half-way back to the telegraph station — his suffering brothers would be in hospital in Edmonton. Now he could cook a meal and take his time about walking back.

But with McConachie and his heavily loaded plane, all was not as well as Charles imagined. Just before lift-off there had been a strong vibration which rapidly increased in intensity until it seemed the Fokker might fly apart. Under the deadly threat of disintegration he was forced to throttle back until the plane was barely airborne. Neither he nor Chris Green could determine the cause — the engine and fuselage seemed all right — but McConachie knew that disaster was very near and that any increase in speed would result in a crash. Calling on all his skills, he nursed the plane all the 200 miles to Edmonton where they finally dropped onto the grass-covered chunk of cow-pasture which served in those days as the Edmonton Industrial Airport.

Frank and George Senz were hastily unloaded and sent on their way to hospital. After forty hours of suffering, their terrible ordeal was now nearly over. Chris Green examined the exterior of the plane and called McConachie over. Somewhere in that thick growth of reeds along the lakeshore the wooden propeller had hit an obstruction during take-off. The impact had split it from end to end. All that was holding it together were the bolts around its centre hub and a thin strip of metal binding!

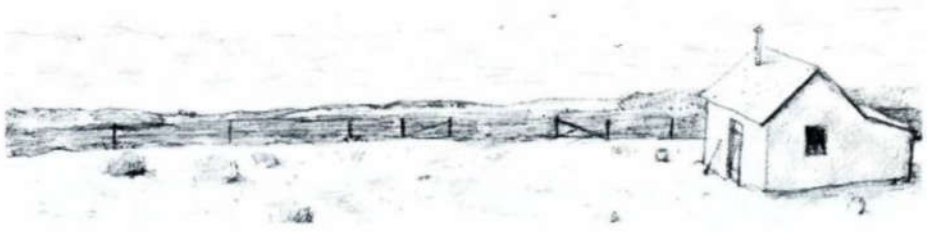
The two Senz brothers spent many weeks in hospital recovering from their injuries before they returned to the lonely telegraph outpost at Upper Wells. During their absence Charles manned the station. It was a proud day for him when he received his first pay cheque from the federal government, as telegraph operator at Upper Wells.

The old telegraph building still stands today at Upper Wells, battered but, until recently, still inhabited. After the telegraph service was discontinued in 1954 Dick Neuman, long-time trapper and trading-post operator, moved into the house and lived there until his death in 1978. The building was still serviced by the natural gas well drilled so long ago.◆

SOMEONE WITH ME

By William Kurelek. McClelland and Stewart, Toronto, 1980. 176 pp., illus. $14.95.

Reviewed by Abraham Arnold



This book is an account of the author's travailed odyssey from his birth on an Alberta homestead farm in 1927 to his conversion to Roman Catholicism which was followed by his marriage and his achievement of success as an artist.

William Kurelek became one of Canada's most popular artists in the 18 years prior to his sudden death in 1977, and the low and high points of his life are well known. His paintings have reached a wide audience through the *Prairie Boy* books, *Lumberjack*, *O Toronto*, *Kurelek's Canada* and others. His life and works have been dealt with extensively in documentary films, on television programs and in magazine features.

Kurelek's autobiography is not new. It was published originally, as Jean Kurelek points out in her foreword, on the initiative of Dr James Maas for his psychology students at Cornell University. In fact it was Dr Maas who encouraged Kurelek to write the book some time after he met the artist as a patient at Maudsley Psychiatric Hospital in England.

The first two chapters deal with Kurelek's experience as a mental hospital patient. He admitted himself voluntarily in his endeavour to find a cure for depression and emotional instability which eventually extended to attempted suicide. The book then turns back to an account of his life as the first child of a Ukrainian immigrant farmer who arrived in Alberta in 1924 with just nine dollars in his pocket.

It is well known that Kurelek's personal anguish came largely from his conflict with his father. Actually this was a second generation conflict but Metro Kurelek left his father's home in the Ukraine never to return. William, on the other hand, always had to go home again. It becomes clear, in fact, that the author's need to become reconciled with his father was essential to his achievement of peace of mind and personal maturity.

Kurelek recounts his struggles as a child and an adolescent in a prairie-farm family, first in Alberta and later in Manitoba. He then tells of his travels in search of an art education and a cure for his mental problems. In the end he was self-educated in art, never having completed formal studies, though he took various courses.

In spite of the psychiatric therapy to which he submitted himself, including shock-treatment, one has to agree, on the basis of Kurelek's account, that he found the path to mental stability largely through the personal contacts that led him to the church.

This volume is a re-written version of the original and Kurelek completed it shortly before his death. The original book was unedited and ran to over 500 pages. The new version has been edited as well as condensed and its main defects must be attributed to the publisher, and to editor Max Layton.

William Kurelek achieved great skill as a painter, but not as a writer. He wrote much as he spoke and his folksy idiom, transferred to the printed page, sometimes appears cliché-ridden, simplistic and occasionally confusing.

One example of the latter weakness is in the account of the author's visit to an eye specialist in Mexico City. (He was searching for a cure for his eye pain which turned out to be part of his emotional problem.)

Sketches are from Kurelek's original autobiography. They do not appear in the 1980 revised edition.

All in one paragraph Kurelek relates that en route to the eye doctor he saw 'the grimier side streets of the great city', passed along one street 'lined with hundreds of prostitutes' and it appears as though, in the middle of that street, he was treated by the eye doctor.

Careful editing could surely have improved this passage, and others like it, without losing Kurelek's folksy flavour. Moreover the editor of an artist's autobiography ought to be able to avoid misspelling the name of the Mexican mural painter Siqueiros (it appears three times as 'Sigueros'). He should also know that on leaving Los Angeles one would travel east and not west to reach Las Vegas. (Kurelek had his direction right in the original version.)

Some worthwhile episodes, especially on the West, have been dropped in this new volume. In addition all examples of Kurelek's art, except for the self-portrait on the jacket, have been left out. This is surely the most serious omission.

The original book included full-colour reproductions of Kurelek's two famous self-exposé paintings: 'The Maze' and 'I Spit on Life', as well as many black and white sketches illustrating his experiences. It is difficult to understand why they have all been eliminated in this trade edition of the Kurelek autobiography.

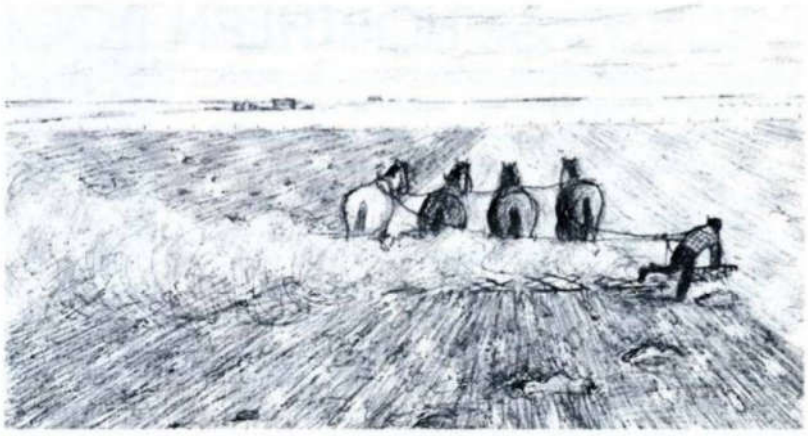
After reading this book there may still be sceptics who will wonder whether Kurelek truly achieved stability and personal maturity. It should be understood, however, that *Someone With Me* is, after all, a memoir and not a complete and final statement of the artist's views. His total output of artistic works and written commentaries remains to be assessed.

Some time before his death Kurelek wrote a comment on art for *Contemporary Artists*, an encyclopaedic volume published by St James Press, London, in 1977. He began as follows:

'I have to say I don't think art is the most important thing in life. People are. To be more specific, human souls. If there were thus a choice to be made — saving a person's soul or all of my paintings — I wouldn't hesitate a moment in saying "Destroy my paintings".'

That is quite a statement for one who endured such intense personal suffering to achieve his goal as an artist.

Mr Arnold is co-author, with William Kurelek, of 'Jewish Life in Canada'.



CHILDREN OF THE NORTH

By Fred Bruemmer. Optimum Publishing, Montreal, 1979. 159 pp., illus. $29.95.

Reviewed by
Minnie Aodla Freeman

In reviewing Fred Bruemmer's book *Children of the North* I hope I do not destroy his idea that Inuit children are brought up to be 'charming, well-behaved and obedient'. Since I experienced an Inuit childhood, I can assure readers that diplomacy was another virtue parents encouraged in their children. What can appear to a casual observer as politeness can indeed be anything but — and that is as true of the Inuit as anyone else.

The stranger to Inuit culture who reads *Children of the North* will think that all Inuit children are angels. I wish I could agree with that view. But then the author is quoting observers from 1771, 1881 and the 1930s, among many others, and Heaven only knows what they saw in those times! I'm sorry to say that *Children of the North* is yet another book which does not explain enough *why* Inuit do this and do that. For instance, the telling of scary stories: this is because Inuit parents know that children do not listen to mere words, but if one can get their imaginations working then there is little chance they will wander far from their parents when arriving in new camping areas.

In the chapter 'There is No Turning Back', I agree with the author that we Inuit have been made helpless — and as Fred Bruemmer himself says many times: *ajurnnamat* — there is absolutely nothing we can do about it at this time. That is to say, not until we receive a proper education. The examples provided now include drunkards, those who use foul language, and the movies.

But as always, Fred Bruemmer's pictures tell me all I need to know as an Inuk. The picture of a hazy sun (p. 14) tells me it is so bitter cold that there is no smell alive in the air. A picture of a grandmother feeding her grandchild (p. 37) tells me she counts in her family. A picture of a young girl carrying a baby (p. 55) tells me that she is helping her busy mother and at the same time learning to handle a baby so as to be able to cope when her own baby arrives. A picture of a father crooning a song to his child (p. 68) means that a unique relationship is being formed that will have intense and special meaning to both. There are pictures of small children (p. 87) in their *special* travelling clothes (for they don't always dress like this); children fishing, while one watches a sea gull (p. 132-133) to read the sign from the bird where the fish is now; pictures of children training puppies (p. 150) to get them accustomed to human beings so they will not be dangerous as full-grown and powerful dogs.

The book shows us much of the children of the North. There is more to be read into the pictures than into the accompanying text.

Mrs Freeman, author of 'Life among the Qallunaat' was born on the Cape Hope Islands, Northwest Territories.

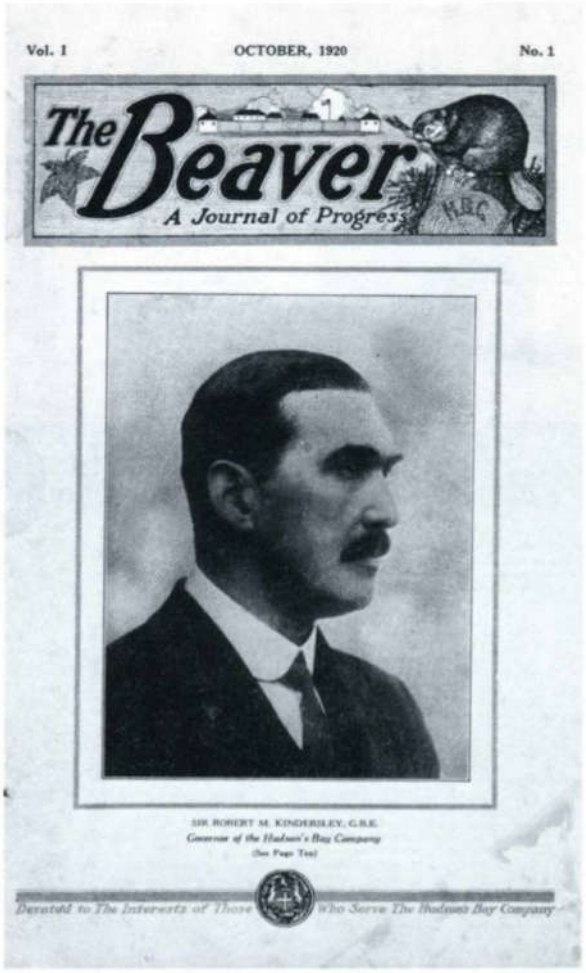
'Snug in his hammock, a Naskapi boy from Labrador, Canada, drinks his milk.' From 'Children of the North' by Fred Bruemmer.

READERSHIP SURVEY

More than 4,000 readers returned the Spring 1980 questionnaire with suggestions that are now under consideration. We have acted on one of the most frequent requests: that the map on the contents page be used again. You also suggested that a selection of articles from earlier issues be published. We are responding to this idea with the sixtieth anniversary issue. Your interest and support are appreciated. Thank you.

The Editor

SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE


Vol. 1 OCTOBER, 1920 No. 1

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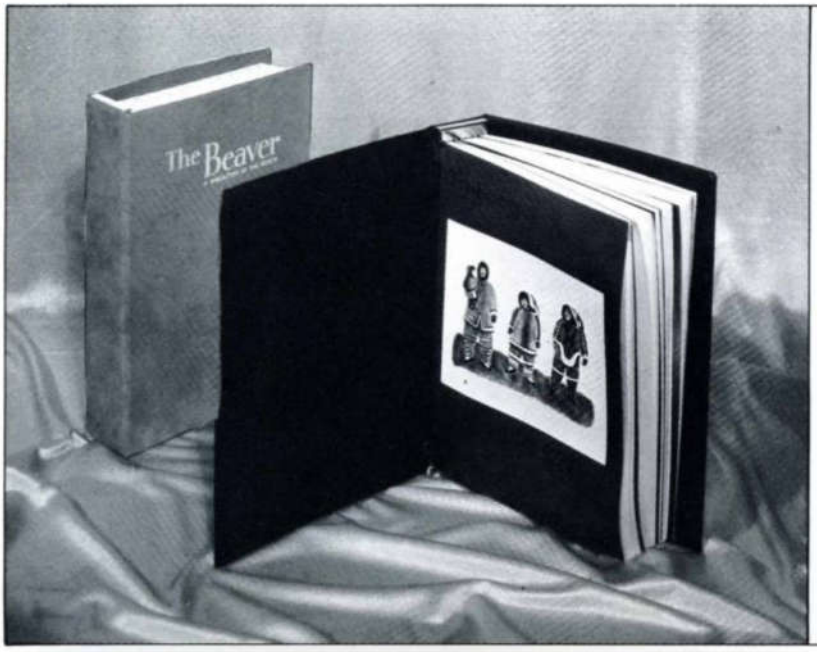

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